

“IT’S NOT ABOUT WINNING, IT’S ABOUT PARTICIPATING”

Uncovering the determinants of regional participation
in the policy-making structures of the European Union

**Master thesis
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ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to uncover which factors determine regional participation in European Union policy-making structures. It does so by conducting a multiple regression analysis of 233 regions from all the 27 member-states in the EU.

Previous research on regional participation in the EU is mainly concentrated in two contrasting traditions: one qualitative with focus on describing possible regional participation through different channels, and one quantitative concerned with explaining what causes regions to participate in one specific way by setting up representation offices in Brussels. In this thesis, these two traditions are brought together. First, the qualitative tradition is used to construct a measure of participation that includes all possible channels regions have to participate in EU policy-making. Second, this measure, which conceptualizes participation more broadly than measures used in previous quantitative research and hence gives a more profound understanding of the relations between European regions and the EU, is used within the framework of the causal tradition as the dependent variable in the multiple regression analysis.

The central finding of the analysis is that the main determinant of regional participation in EU policy-making is the degree of political autonomy regions have within their national polities. The more autonomous a region is domestically, the more it participates in the policy-making structures of the Union. Furthermore, it is found that degree of autonomy matters particularly much for regional participation in the Council of the European Union, the Committee of the Regions, and in European-wide lobbies. For the participation of regions in the European Commission and the European Parliament, and for the establishment of representation offices in Brussels, political autonomy is found to be less important. Other factors such as regional resources and regional identity are not found to have any significant effect on regional participation in the EU.

The findings imply that the degree to which regions manage to bypass the nation-state and access EU policy-making largely remains under the control of the central state through national devolutionary arrangements and provisions. However, there are some trends towards more decentralization in many EU member-states, indicating that regional participation might increase in the years to come. Moreover, regions themselves may have some scope of action by trying to access the policy-making channels where participation is less affected by the degree of political autonomy.

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I dedicate this master thesis to the memory of my dear friend Johan, who passed away far too soon in the fall of 2009. It's all for you, man. Clear eyes, full hearts – can't lose.

Iver M. Fiksdal

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PREFACE

Across Europe, regions raise their voices all the time. In the UK, when the Scottish took to the voting booths in the local elections in early May 2011, it was in an election with a strong regional dimension. This also showed in the results. With almost 50 per cent of the votes, the Scottish National Party was Scotland's largest party for the first time since the first Scottish election in 1999, holding a parliamentary majority in Holyrood. The election result gave additional fire to the debate of Scottish independence from the United Kingdom (*Aftenposten*, 06.05.11).

A few months earlier, as many Italian cities were finishing the last preparations for the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Italian Republic, President Luis Durnwalder of the autonomous community of Bolzano put on the brakes. Bolzano was not to take part in the national festivities planned by the government. "I respect those people who want to celebrate, but I see no reason to celebrate", Durnwalder stated. In the *eigenartige* German-speaking community of Northern Italy, few seemed to find any good reason to celebrate their *italianità* (*New York Times*, 16.03.11).

Strong regionalism is visible also in other arenas. Non-Basque-speaking travelers may find it hard to find their way in the Basque Country of Northern Spain and Southern France, a region where inhabitants are notoriously known for using road signs to promote their strong regional identity by painting over directions in Spanish or French, leaving only the Basque names. Driving on the same roads, one could encounter the Euskadi cycling team, the highly recognized professional bicycle racing team known for recruiting riders of Basque heritage only. In other sports, when the successful football teams of FC Barcelona and Bayern Munich play matches in the European Cups, it is just as much as representatives of their regions Catalonia and Bavaria as of Spain and Germany.

For many European citizens, state and nation are not necessarily synonyms. In a Europe of strong regional sentiments some even find it difficult to see the state as the most obvious unit of political representation. Against this backdrop, what role do regions play with regard to the European Union? Could the European Union be an escape route for regions by offering an alternative political arena where they may act independently from the state? Why is the EU attractive to sub-national actors? And, what is it that determines whether or not regions manage to participate in the EU? The theme of this thesis is how European regions take part in the policy-making structures of the European Union, and what it is that determines their participation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

“The European Union needs you. Now it is for you to show what you can do for Europe”

- Jacques Delors, opening speech at the inauguration of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, March 9th 1994

1.1 A role for regions?

In 1994, Commission President Jacques Delors opened a new chapter in European integration, by forming the Committee of the Regions (CoR). By increasing regional input in the EU, the CoR was meant to help connect the European Union closer to its citizens and thereby help reduce the highly debated democratic deficit of the EU (Jeffery 2006:313). The establishment of the CoR offered a formal inclusion of European regions in the policy-making structures of the EU, for which the need seemed indeed dire. With the 1992 introduction of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and its principle of subsidiarity, the European Union had delegated more responsibilities than ever before to regional authorities across the EU member-states¹. The expectation was that the regions, which now were responsible for seeing many of the EU's policies through, also could provide useful *input* on Union legislation (Jeffery 2006:313).

Although greeted by politicians and scholars as a way of ensuring more democracy and a stronger European identity in the EU, the impact of the CoR as a channel of regional influence on European policy-making has been claimed by most to be fairly limited (Kincaid 1999; Hooghe and Marks 1996; Bomberg and Peterson 1998; Keating and Hooghe 2006; Tatham 2008). In general, there seems to have been little direct regional input in the policy-making structures of the EU despite the establishment of the CoR (Hooghe and Marks 1996:76; Keating and Hooghe 2006:283). Moreover, other findings show that regional influence through more indirect channels such as the European Commission (EC) or the Council of the European Union (CoEU) has been limited, as well (Greenwood 2003:230-231; Tatham 2008:510).

Nevertheless, almost twenty years after the establishment of the CoR, regions continue to try to influence EU policy-making in a variety of ways. And, some regions do manage to take active part

¹ The principle of subsidiarity ensures that decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizens. Unless it is more effective than action taken at national, regional or local level, the Union does not take action. (http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/glossary/subsidiarity_en.htm, November 1th 2010)

in the structures of policy-making of the Union. This thesis seeks to explain why some regions participate in the policy-making structures of the EU, while others do not. The research question of the thesis is the following:

Which factors determine the participation of regional authorities in the policy-making structures of the European Union?

It is important to clarify that this thesis does not study how much political influence regions have in the EU. The area of interest under examination here – regional participation – places itself one step before influence in the policy process. This choice rests on the premise that regions in order to be able to influence EU policies, first have to manage to access EU policy-making procedures. The boundaries of what this thesis considers to be participation are drawn towards the end of this chapter.

1.2 Why study regional participation in the EU?

Regional participation became a salient issue in EU research in the late 1980s, largely because of the policy innovation in the EU following the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986 and the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) in 1992 (Elias 2008:483). The term “Europe of the Regions”, referring to the fact that regions constituted a new level of actors on the scene of European politics, was in the early 1990s advocated by the European Commission itself (John 2000:882), and it has since then been used as the point of departure for much academic work. However, most scholars studying the role of regions in the EU have come to the conclusion that it is premature or exaggerated to speak of a “Europe of the Regions” (Hooghe and Marks 1996; Keating and Hooghe 2006; Marks et al. 1996; Marks et al. 2001; Bomberg and Peterson 1998; Tatham 2008; Jeffery 2000).

In spite of these negative assessments of regional participation, however, the argument of a regional Europe does not seem to disappear. Regions still remain an important actor in the politics of the EU (Elias 2008:487). In the last ten years, decentralization has continued in several member-states like Spain and the United Kingdom, with regions taking on more important political responsibilities for implementing and enforcing European legislation (John 2000:878). The number of regional representation offices in Brussels continues to grow. In 2007 there were more than 250 regional offices in Brussels, up from zero in 1984 (Moore 2008:520). Such offices are growing in resources and staff as well as in quantity (Moore 2008:521). This increase underlines the fact that European

regions consider it highly necessary and possible to try to get in a position to influence European and policy-makers directly (Elias 2008:487).

That regions play a role in the EU becomes evident also in the large debates around the future of the Union as such. During the work with a European Constitution², European regions pushed hard for a greater constitutional and more politicized role, demonstrating that the term of “Europe of the Regions” perhaps should not be thrown away too easily after all (Jeffery 2000, Greenwood 2003). As the supranational level of the EU grows stronger and the use of the principal of subsidiarity more extensive, it seems likely that regional actors would be interested in participating more in Union policy-making, in order to get in a position to influence the policies they ultimately are responsible for implementing.

From an identity perspective, regional sentiments remain very strong across large parts of the EU. Eurobarometer (EB) surveys continue to show that regional identity is almost just as strong as national identity. When asked about regional and national identity in the EB 71 (2009), respondents throughout the Union described themselves almost equally much as citizens of their regions as citizens of their states. In fact, regional identity scored only three percentage points lower than national identity. Both measures outscored European identity by almost twenty per cent (Eurobarometer 71, 2009:34). In short, the strong patterns of regionalism in politics and citizens' identity that we find in many countries across Europe, suggest that the role of the region in the EU by no means is outplayed. Rather, they offer an interesting empirical justification for further research on regional participation in the EU of today.

1.3 What does the thesis contribute?

There is a clear need for new research on regionalism in the EU. Much of the early work and data on regional participation in the EU is simply outdated with respect to the political and demographic structures of today's Union. Since the first research on the EU and its regions was conducted in the late 80s and early 90s, EU citizens have seen the implementation of three new treaties³, all of which have altered the policy-making structures of the Union, and thereby changed the incentives and possibilities for regional participation (Tömmel 1998:72). During this period, the Union has also been enlarged three times. The EU now consists of roughly twice as many countries as it did when the TEU was implemented in 1992. As follows, the regional composition of the Union is more

² Eventually abandoned after being voted down in French and Dutch referenda in 2004.

³ The Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), the Treaty of Nice (2001) and the Treaty of Lisbon (2007).

diverse than ever before, both socio-economically, as well as culturally and historically, and the range of regional interests is much wider than it was twenty years ago.

This thesis has three main scientific purposes. First, it aims at reducing the methodological and conceptual discrepancy between the two main traditions of research on the role of regions in EU policy-making, by developing a quantitative measure for regional participation. This measure provides an analytical tool that gives a broader and more complete picture of how regions take part in the policy-making of the European Union. Second, it seeks to specify a theoretical framework that takes into consideration both *how* and *why* regions participate in the EU, by using a synthesis of multi-level governance and Europeanization theory. Third, it uses the quantitative regional participation measure developed to conduct a large-N multiple regression analysis of 233 European regions, in order to uncover the factors that determine regional participation in EU policy-making.

The first aim of the thesis is to reduce the methodological gap in the literature on participation. Research on regional participation in the EU is a divided discipline, dominated by two separate traditions of research. The first line of research is qualitative and descriptive, whereas the other is quantitative and variable-oriented. Although they both focus on regions, the two main lines are incompatible methodologically and conceptually when seen together as a single body of research.

The first tradition presents a descriptive account of the formal channels regions try to use in order to access the EU. In other words: it is an account of how regions *may* participate in the EU, seen as a multi-level political system. This academic tradition discusses the variety of different channels of participation regions have that *can* be used to participate in policy-making in the Union, and how they have developed over time (Hooghe and Marks 1996; Keating and Hooghe 2006; John 2000; Jeffery 2000; Peterson and Shackleton 2006; Bomberg and Peterson 1998). It does not, however, look at how regions actually *do* participate.

The second tradition of research has a more causal focus. The scholars working in this tradition look at the external factors that determine why regions set up offices in Brussels, that is; regional *mobilization* (Marks et al. 1996, 2002; Nielsen and Salk 1998; Tatham 2010). However, this research tradition fails to recognize the variety of participation options regions have. By looking at the establishment of regional representation offices in Brussels, this tradition only focuses on what must be characterized as just one type of participation, instead of looking at regional participation more broadly. The conceptual and methodological discrepancy between the two traditions then, lies in recognizing which channels matter to regions when seeking access to EU policy-making, and in

how to measure this regional participation. This is exactly what this thesis aims to do, by constructing an index of regional participation that covers participation more extensively than previous measures do.

The second aim of the thesis is to specify a theoretical framework that explains both how and why regions participate in the policy-making of the EU. Much of the research on the role of regions in the EU has been criticized for the lack of a proper theorization of the causal mechanisms that drive regional participation in policy-making. Neither the qualitative nor the quantitative line of researchers gives a clear account of *why* regions seek to play a part in the EU system. There are no specifications as to what there is about the EU that allows regions to try to bypass their nation-states and participate in EU policy-making more directly. In this thesis, I seek to reduce the theoretical underspecification in much of the previous research by presenting a theoretical framework that specifies concretely the mechanisms in place that explain *why* regions participate in policy-making structures at the supranational level.

The third aim of this thesis is to use the new index of regional participation in large-N comparative research. The exploratory nature of the qualitative line of research has led to there being a lack of any cross-regional, large-N comparative studies on regional participation. Quite simply, there are no studies that look at how regions manage to access the different channels of participation or at what determines why these channels are available to some regions while being unavailable to other.

All of the existing large-N, cross-regional studies that have been done, have been conducted within the second line of research (Marks et al. 1996, 1998; Nielsen and Salk 1998; Tatham 2010). As mentioned above, these studies, although well-conducted, do not include the array of participation channels available to European regions in order to participate in EU policy-making, both extra-state and intra-states ones. Hence, there exists a clear need for cross-regional, comparative studies that look at regional participation more broadly, both conceptually and empirically. Such broad empirical studies can make it possible to come up with findings that give a more thorough understanding of how European regions make use of different participation channels to try to influence EU policy-making. Here, this is done by conducting a large-N comparative study of regional participation in all channels available to European regions that feed into the policy-making process of the EU.

In this thesis then, I aim at reducing the described discrepancy between the two main traditions of research on regional participation in the EU. I seek to reduce the theoretical shortcomings by

presenting a theoretical framework that specifies the mechanisms that drive regional participation in the EU. Furthermore, I use the qualitative line of research on different channels of participation to develop a more solid and sophisticated quantitative measure that captures not just regional mobilization, but regional participation more broadly. Then, it is possible to run a large-N regression analysis of European regions, uncovering the factors that determine their actual participation in EU policy-making.

1.4 Conceptual clarifications: regional authority, participation and policy-making

In this thesis, the concept of *regional authority* is seen in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity in the TEU, which delegates power of administration and implementation of EU policy to regions in cases where this is considered most efficient. A regional authority may be defined to be the entity of sub-national administrative level in the member-states that has such functions of implementation and execution of policy. However, this is not as straight-forward as it sounds. Across the EU, the competencies, responsibilities and administrative functions that these entities have, differ quite a lot (Keating and Hooghe 2006:270). There is enormous variance in the functioning and power of regional authorities both between European countries and within these countries. These differences in competencies are likely to affect the results of any analysis where the units of analysis are European regions (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008:113). As follows, the way regional authority is defined might have consequences for the findings of the thesis.

However, in a multiple regression analysis, such “pre-set” structural differences among regional authorities in the EU may be incorporated in the analysis as explanatory variables, and the effect that different competencies have on regional participation may be assessed. As such, the fact that regional authorities are not identical across the EU can be controlled for. What is important then, in order to be able to identify easily the differences between regional authorities, is that the units of analysis are selected in a uniform, predictable and rule-bound way. In this thesis, regional authorities are therefore defined as the highest executive and administrative level situated directly below the central state level in each member-state (Bourne 2003:598). This definition has been used by among others Marks et al. (1996) and Nielsen and Salk (1998), and has proven to be a fruitful way of selecting cases, whilst controlling for pre-defined structural differences among regional authorities at the same time. In the remainder of the thesis, both *regional authority* and the more open term *region* refer to these regional administrative entities.

The definition of regional authority also serves as a selection criteria for the units of analysis in the research project. The study includes all the regions from all the member-states of the EU27 that fall under the definition above. This gives a sample of 233 regions, the largest initial sample in any quantitative analysis on regional participation in the EU. The sample is cross-sectional, i.e. not covering variation over time. Due to the short time-span since the last EU enlargement, no proper time-series of regional participation that include all EU member-states are available. Although it would be of large interest to look at how regional participation has developed over time I have chosen to cover the entire geographical width of today's European Union instead of conducting a time-series analysis of the older members. The alternative of removing newer member-states in order to look at participation over time of regions that have been a part of the EU for a longer time seems less compatible with the research question of this study of uncovering the factors that determine regional participation in the EU in general.

Furthermore, this thesis looks at how regions participate in the EU. It is a fair assumption to make that regions are interested in influencing more directly the policies they implement. The central premise for influence, however, is participation. In order to influence policy, regional authorities must be able to use different channels of participation available to them in the EU system. *Participation* here then refers to whether or not regions manage to access these channels to the EU policy-making process, and thereby issue their opinions directly to the important actors in that process.

The policy-making process of the EU is a complex procedure with a variety of actors that try to influence the policies of the Union. The formal power to initiate policy and draft legislation lies with the European Commission (Hooghe and Marks 2001:12). As the agenda setter of policy-making, the Commission is a central actor for regions to influence if they want to affect the policy outcome in the EU. Input from other actors is also important for how EU policies end up looking. Through the co-decision procedure, both the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament (EP) put their mark on legislation (Shackleton 2006:115), and by providing expert input at preparatory stages of policy development, the Committee of the Regions, European-wide regional lobbies and regional authority offices in Brussels consult the Commission in its work (Hooghe and Marks 2001:15). In sum, this makes policy-making in the European Union a multi-actor activity (Hooghe and Marks 2001:14). Throughout this thesis, the term *policy-making structures* refers to this group of six institutional and informal actors whose input influences the legislation and policies that come from the EU.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

Chapter two provides the theoretical framework of the thesis. First, the chapter reviews how regions have developed in the EU literature from having no role to being considered an independent actor. Second, the chapter illustrates *how* different participation channels for regions have opened, and *why* regions have an interest in participating in these channels. This, which is a synthesis of multi-level governance and Europeanization theory, constitutes the foundation of the thesis as to how regions should be understood as a part of the European Union.

In *chapter three* the dependent variable is presented and discussed. The chapter goes through the six policy-making channels regions can participate in. Together, these six channels constitute the quantitative measure this thesis aims at producing: the Regional Participation Index (RPI). The chapter proceeds by going through the operationalizations of each of the six channels. Chapter three is concluded with a brief descriptive analysis.

Chapter four presents the explanatory model for regional participation. The model focuses on structural explanations, and is founded theoretically in the theoretical framework. The model argues that regional participation in EU policy-making structures largely depends on three dimensions: resources, political autonomy and degree of regional identity. In the final part of the chapter some alternative explanatory approaches to regional participation are considered, and methodological problems that relate to these approaches are discussed.

The method is presented in *chapter five*. First, the choice of a quantitative approach to studying regional participation is discussed. Second, regression analysis and the multiple OLS regression model are presented in detail. Third, some challenges in using only cross-sectional data in this study are confronted. Fourth, the three dimensions of the explanatory model are operationalized as variables, so that they may be tested in regression analysis. Ultimately, the analysis is diagnosed by testing the preconditions on which regression analysis is based.

In *chapter six* the analysis is carried out. The chapter starts by looking at the central descriptives for the explanatory variables. Then, the same variables are tested in regression analysis for their effect on regional participation. The strength of each individual dimension is discussed, as well as the explanatory strength of the entire model. Furthermore, the main finding in the regression analysis is examined closer using simple cross table analysis.

Chapter seven concludes the thesis by summarizing the results and findings. The contribution of the findings to the field of research is discussed and it is debated whether they may have any implications for how to understand regional participation in the EU. As a last point, some suggestions for future research are presented.

2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

That borders equal states and states equal territorial borders is a thing of the past.

(Christiansen and Jørgensen 1995:18)

This chapter consists of two parts. The chapter starts with a review of some of the most significant theoretical approaches to European integration, focusing on how the regional level gradually has been included in EU theory as an important part of the Union as integration has deepened. The second part of the chapter supplements the first part, by looking at the mechanisms considered to drive European regions to try to participate in EU policy-making structures. Whereas the first part looks at *how* regions have developed a more important role in the Union, the second part looks at *why* regions would have an interest in playing this role. Together, these two parts provides the theoretical framework of this thesis, and a basis to understanding how the regional level in EU member-states is connected to the supranational level of the EU.

2.1 The classic dichotomy of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism

Since their initial formulation in the 1960s, two models of how to see the European Union have dominated all EU research: intergovernmentalism and supranationalism. The intergovernmental model, advocated by a wide array of scholars from Hoffmann (1966) via Milward (1992) to Andrew Moravcsik (1993, 1998), consider national governments to be the definite sources of power in the EU. Policy-making is seen as a state-centric activity: if supranational institutions actually do arise, they are simply products of the will of national governments (Hooghe and Marks 2001:2). The overall direction of policy in the EU is decided by intergovernmental bargaining between states. Institutions such as the European Commission are assumed to have little additional, extra-state input to that of the national governments on whose behalf it works (Hooghe and Marks 2001:2). In general, the intergovernmental model sees the outcome of all EU decisions as the products of the lowest common denominator acceptable to all member-states.

In sharp contrast to the intergovernmental model, the supranational model of the EU emphasizes the power and political influence of extra-state institutions such as the European Commission (George 2004:110). The model of a supranational EU was brought to the forefront by scholars such as Haas (1958, 1970) and Lindberg (1963), and has been advocated more recently by Sandholtz, Zysman and Stone Sweet (Sandholtz and Zysman 1989; Sandholtz and Stone Sweet 1998). The

supranational model sees European integration as functional. When national governments initiate integration of policy in some specific areas, this will generate more integration in other policy areas as well. Due to this functional spill-over between policy sectors, national governments will not be able to control every step of European integration (George 2004:109). Moreover, the power supranational institutions have is larger than the power they are delegated from the governments in the member-states. Within the supranational model, the Commission is seen as an institution that pushes European integration forward, with significant autonomy from the governments of the member states of the EU (George 2004:109).

Neither of the classic models emphasizes regions as a source of political influence in the EU. In the intergovernmental model, regional authorities are constrained to participation within the boundaries of the nation-states. National governments are the conductors through which sub-national influences might reach the EU-level of governance (Hooghe and Marks 2001:4). There exists in other words no way for regional authorities to influence the EU level, other than through channels of national government.

With its focus on functional spill-over and autonomy beyond national government, the supranational model argues for a pluralist understanding of influence in the EU. Regions, however, do not seem to play a role in this model either. Supranational institutions may form alliances with different actors, but regions are not mentioned in the model as one of these actors. Instead, supranational institutions are expected to form alliances with interest groups in integrated policy sectors such as trade, and departments of states with specialized functions in the respective member-states, such as environment (George 2004:109).

2.2 A new model of a new Union - Multi-Level Governance

In his work from 1992 on structural policy in the European Communities, Gary Marks introduced the idea of a European Union consisting of not just one or two, but multiple levels of governance. Marks (1992:221 in Sbragia 1992) suggested that “instead of a neat, two-sided process involving member states and Community institutions, one finds a complex, multilayered, decision-making process stretching beneath the state as well as above it”. The negotiations leading to the ratification of the TEU in 1992 and the completion of the European common market with its four freedoms, demonstrated the existence of such a complex system of actors. National governments were no longer in a position to control all aspects of European integration (Sandholtz and Zysman 1989:100). In light of these negotiations and the successive implementation of the Treaty on the

European Union, Marks formulated the concept of multi-level governance (MLG) (Marks 1993 in Cafruny and Rosenthal 1993; George 2004:110). The concept in its most elaborated form was presented in the book *Multi-Level Governance and European Integration* (2001), co-written by Marks and Liesbet Hooghe.

The MLG model offers an approach to understanding European Union governance that is not easily fitted in the long-standing dichotomy of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism (Piattoni 2009:165). The model confronts the view of the intergovernmental model where states are the only actors that matter in developing European policy (Piattoni 2009:165). At the same time, it also confronts the supranational view of integration being self-propelled through functional spill-over between policy sectors (George 2004:110). According to Marks, the EU must be seen not only as a set of member-states with complete control over European policy-making, or autonomous EU institutions that may push integration forward unchecked and unchallenged (Hooghe and Marks 2001:3). Instead, the EU should be understood as a multi-level system of actors, ranging from sub-national authorities and non-governmental organizations, via national governments, to supranational institutions (Piattoni 2009:166).

The multi-level governance model rests largely on three elements. First, supranational EU institutions are believed to exercise far more power than is recognized in the intergovernmental view of the EU. The European Parliament, the Commission and the European Court of Justice have direct policy-making influence that cannot be attributed to the role they have as agents of member-state governments (Hooghe and Marks 2001:3). Second, the intergovernmental view that all EU decisions lead to lowest common denominator outcomes acceptable to all national governments is dismissed. According to Hooghe and Marks (2001:4), such decisions occur only on a subset of decisions. Far more often, policy-making in the Union involves gains and losses for individual member-states. National governmental control of policy-making is, in other words, not definite. Third, the multi-level model rejects the view that domestic and international politics are separate spheres (Hooghe and Marks 2001:4). Whereas intergovernmentalists see the EU as an organization in which national governments operate separately from their respective domestic arenas, the multi-level governance model sees the different political spheres as *interconnected*. National governments play a role in developing EU policy, and the EU plays a role in developing national policy. In addition, the national and the European level are connected to the *sub-national level*. In a similar fashion to the way they are unable to completely control the supranational level, national governments are also unable to deny sub-national authorities in EU member-states operating in the supranational sphere (Hooghe and Marks 2001:4).

These three points are fundamentally important for understanding the role of regional actors in the EU. In clear contrast to the supranational and the intergovernmental models of the EU, the novel model of multi-level governance envisions a distinct role for regional authorities within a system of policy-making where several political levels are interconnected (Hooghe and Marks 2001:4). In the view of Hooghe and Marks, the dyadic relationship modelled by intergovernmentalists in particular, has been weakened by the developments in the late 1980s and 1990s. It may no longer be claimed that regions work exclusively within the national political context (Hooghe and Marks 2001:81; John 2000:879).

The development of a scene of regions that actively participate in EU policy-making is attributed to what Hooghe and Marks (2001:81) refer to as a multiplication of channels for sub-national mobilization. Regions interact with both national and supranational actors through diverse channels, both intra- and extra-state (Hooghe and Marks 1996:73). The sources of this multiplication are partly found in the implementation of the Single European Act in 1986 and the Treaty on the European Union in 1992, and in the establishment of the Committee of the Regions in 1994. To some degree, also smaller changes such as the 1988 Reform of the Structural Funds have had an impact on channels of participation available to regions (Hooghe and Marks 1996:78).

The Single European Act made quite a few changes to the institutional structures of the European Communities. Although the changes following from the SEA have been dubbed incremental for the EU in general (Dehousse and Maignette 2006:23), they have had consequences for regional participation. The introduction of regional policy as a policy area in the European Communities, gave both regional authorities and European-wide lobbies working for regional interests a more direct incentive to establish in Brussels and try to influence policy-making. The extra-state channels of direct sub-national representation offices and regional lobby alliances have been used extensively by regional authorities since the introduction of the SEA (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:28-29). In addition, the European Parliament was connected closer to law-making through the cooperation procedure (Dehousse and Maignette 2006:23). The more active role of the EP in EU policy-making provided a new extra-state access channel for regional authorities, in spite of EP power still being relatively weak (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:226).

When the Treaty on the European Union was ratified in 1992, further changes to the institutional framework of the EU were introduced. In legislative matters, the role of the EP was once again strengthened, this time through the co-decision procedure (Dehousse and Maignette 2006:24). With

this provision, the EP can and does influence policy-making in the EU significantly (Shackleton 2006:117). The EP therefore constitutes an important channel of participation for European regions.

Following the TEU, regions also gained direct access to the Council of the European Union (CoEU). Under Article 146 of the Treaty, regional ministers were granted the right to represent their respective member-states in Council meetings (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:226). Although regional ministers usually represent national interests when they participate in the Council, their secondary role as regional politicians still is of importance (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:226). This gives regional authorities another channel to use in order to try to influence policy-making.

With the establishment of the Committee of the Regions in 1994, regional authorities also received a more formalized access channel to EU policy-making. The committee allows representatives from regions across the Union to give their opinions on most EU policy issues (Tatham 2008:506). The powers of the CoR are only of consultative character, however, and other EU institutions are under no obligation to implement CoR opinions in legislation. Due to this fact, most scholars have assessed the CoR as a relatively weak institution, and relatively unimportant as a means to promote regional interests (Hooge and Marks 1996; Bomberg and Peterson 1998; Keating and Hooghe 2006). Nevertheless, the existence of a structure that maintains direct regional input in policy-making has value to it. The CoR is a useful source of information on the needs and wishes of European regions, and it provides the EU with a good link with the grassroots (Tatham 2008:506). As such, it remains an important channel of participation for regional authorities.

According to Tatham (2008:502), the most important actor for regional authorities to influence in the EU is the European Commission (EC). The EC enjoys a monopoly of initiative in most fields of policy, but still remains very dependent on input and consultation from other actors and institutions (Tatham 2008:502). Historically, the Commission has been sympathetic to the interests of sub-national authorities (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:223; Tatham 2008:502). Since the 1988 reform of the Structural Funds, regional authorities have been included in the so-called partnership programmes that exist in the formulation and management of cohesion and regional policy (Hooghe and Marks 1996:78). Also, Tatham's studies show that the Commission to a larger degree than many other EU institutions is characterized by an *open door policy*, where the thresholds for regional authorities to issue opinions directly to the EC are low (Tatham 2008:502). For regional authorities, therefore, the Commission constitutes a final extra-state channel of participation.

The multi-level governance view described above of how channels of regional participation have multiplied due to institutional changes in EU integration, provides the theoretical point of departure of this thesis. There can be no doubt about the fact that, in light of treaty changes and new institutional arrangements in the EU, regional authorities have developed a position in the Union that they did not have a few years ago. Regions now have multiple possible access points to the EU policy-making processes. This thesis will focus on six different channels of participation: the CoR, the EC, the EP, and the CoEU; and sub-national representation offices and European-wide lobbies. However, can it simply be expected that regions automatically will use these channels? What is it in the EU system that is attractive enough to drive regions to try to access the six participation channels described in the MLG model?

2.3 *Europeanization of the nation-state?* Why regions try to bypass national government

Even though the MLG model has been recognized as a well-established description of how regions may participate in policy-making, it has also been subject to substantial criticism (George 2004:108). Jeffery (2000) and Jordan (2001) are highly critical of the MLG model's theoretical perspective. According to Jeffery, the development of the MLG model is too closely related to the policy sector of EU structural policy, and therefore provides no generalizable framework of analysis for the EU (Jeffery 2000:7). Moreover, the MLG model does not propose a framework for understanding why and how different regions engage differently across the range of policy activities in the EU (Jeffery 2000:8). In short, critics claim that the multi-level governance theory is not a theory at all, because it does not specify the causal mechanisms of sub-national integration in the EU (Jordan 2001:201).

A few scholars have tried to specify properly the mechanisms that drive regional participation. In this thesis, I follow the overarching concept of *Europeanization* by Johan P. Olsen in order to establish these mechanisms. Europeanization is understood by Olsen (2002:922; 2007:227) as changes in governance and structures at the domestic level of the nation-state as a consequence of the development of institutions, identities and policies at the EU level. This is a definition that fits well with the multi-level governance approach to understanding the EU. As thoroughly described in the previous parts, it seems clear that the development of European institutions and policies affects the way in which structures are organized in EU member-states. As institutions grow more important as a part of the Union, structures such as participation channels for regions change (Hooghe and Marks 2001:2; Keating and Hooghe 2006:272). In turn, these structural changes affect regional participation (Bartolini 2006:9).

By re-using the classic terminology of exit, voice and loyalty by Albert O. Hirschman (1970), Bartolini (2004, 2006) and Kohler-Koch (2005) draw up three main mechanisms of *why* these internal domestic structures change as a consequence of the development of European institutions, policies and identities. In its most general form, Bartolini (2006:8) establishes that Europeanization expands the capacity of local and regional government to access a set of transnational resources; be they regulative, jurisdictional or material. Kohler-Koch (2005:7) provides more detail to the picture. When it comes to regulation, the EU offers to regions and other sub-national actors⁴ routes of escaping unwanted national impositions, restrictions or obligations by introducing new policies that overrun national regulation (Kohler-Koch 2005:7) (A classic example is agricultural policy, where regions may invoke EU regulations in order to avoid additional costs on production as a result of national regulations). The regulative regime of the EU, available to actors at both European and domestic levels, gives regional authorities an option of *exit* from the domestic arena. The same opportunity for exit is inherent to the jurisdictional resources of the EU (Bartolini 2006:8). Regions may use the judicial system of the EU (the European Court of Justice) to go against rulings of national courts that they find unjust. Equivalently, the EU offers exit options also when it comes to material resources. Against potential limitation on material resources from the nation-state, such as financial funding, regions may seek to autonomously access EU material resources like the Structural Funds (Bartolini 2006:8; Kohler-Koch 2005:8) An illustrative example of this type of material resource exit occurred when the former East German Länder came into the EU in the early 1990s, managing to achieve “Objective One” status in EU structural funding (Tarrow 2004:57). In this way, the newly annexed German regions bypassed national governments development plans granting them relatively little funding, exiting to more attractive European development funding. Exit, therefore, is the first important mechanism that drives regional participation. The introduction of EU policies that enjoy precedence over national law and attractive new resources available at the EU level, may lead regions to try to bypass nation-states.

The second mechanism stems from what Olsen (2007:227) refers to as changes related to the development of institutions on the EU level. The argument is similar to that of the MLG model: the very development of new institutions in the EU offers regions opportunities to upgrade their political influence in European policy-making (Kohler-Koch 2005:7). As it becomes possible to participate in EU policy, national politics is no longer the only arena where regions might seek influence. In other words, following from the institutional development in the EU, regional authorities receive *voice* options in addition to the exit options described above. These options are

4 Such actors might be lobby organizations, firms and corporations and individuals. As the focus of this thesis is on regions, such actors will be left out in the following.

of course closely linked. Incentives to use voice towards EU institutions should be expected to increase as the power of regions grow stronger with respect to the power of national government, something that may be a product of the changes in how regions use resources, with exit from domestic resources to EU level resources (Kohler-Koch 2005:6). The more in common regions have with the EU when it comes to responsibility of running policy, the more interested should regional authority be in participating in the policy-making structures of the Union. What drives regional participation through voice, is that regions will try to express their opinion directly to the institutions responsible for the policies and resources they want to make use of. When the possibility to “consume” EU policies is there, the wish of influencing these policies will increase.

Thirdly, in addition to exit and voice, comes the mechanism of *loyalty* (Kohler-Koch 2005:7). The degree, to which regions actually manage to either exit, voice or both, depends not only on whether or not regions find it useful to do so, but also on whether the political changes on the EU level reduce the capacity of the state to organise loyalty and solidarity within its own territory. At the expense of national belonging, a strong regional cultural identity may enhance the chances of regional exit and voice to the EU level (Kohler-Koch 2005:7). Whether caused by identity issues and regional sentiment, or by political disagreement and disbelief in national government, regions that feel disconnected from the state might seek to use EU resources more directly and to try to influence policy developed on a Union level directly. To such regions, the power running from European institutions might be considered just as strong and legitimate as the power held by national government. Conversely, according to Bartolini (2006:10), territorially bounded actors such as regions, where the degree of loyalty to the state is high, often find that their possibility for exit and voice is devalued. The third mechanism, then, is that lack of loyalty to the state may drive regions to more participation in the policy-making structures of the EU, as a result of few converging interests with national policy.

The participation of regions in the EU is driven by these three mechanisms. The increasing opportunities of exit and voice that follow from the legislative, material and jurisdictional resources the EU provides, open for regions a transnational policy space, where there is a chance to bypass national government, access attractive rules and funding, and seek more direct influence with EU institutions (Kohler-Koch 2005:11). The process of Europeanization brings about a de-bordering of member state governance and provokes a de-nationalisation of the political space (Kohler-Koch 2005:6). In this process, state capacity to autonomously control boundary transcendence in the domains where national policy competes with EU policy is reduced. In an EU context, national boundaries simply have become more permeable than before (Bartolini 2006:4).

2.4 Summary

In combination, the two previous parts provide the theoretical framework of this thesis. By using a synthesis of multi-level governance and Europeanization theory, the framework offers both an explanation of *how* regional participation channels have developed as a result of political, institutional and treaty changes in the European Union, and an account of *why* regions have an interest in using these new opportunities to exit the national level and raise their voice on the EU level.

The basic idea that can be drawn from this framework is that regions have much to gain from the EU, both when it comes to funding and legislation. These possible gains do in turn drive regions to participate more actively in EU policy-making. By participating in the policy-making structures of the Union, regions may influence directly the policies they consider to affect them the most. But, from region to region, the degree of participation varies quite a lot. This brings us to the scope of this thesis, namely to explore what it is that causes this variation. Before discussing these factors, however, it would be useful to take a closer look at the dependent variable, regional participation: what is it that actually varies among regions?

3.0 THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE – BUILDING A REGIONAL PARTICIPATION INDEX

In this chapter, the dependent variable in the analysis is presented. By combining the six main channels of participation available to regions, an index of regional participation is constructed. The first section addresses different problems and challenges related to creating a quantitative measure for regional participation. In the second section, each of the six channels is operationalized: representation offices in Brussels, the Committee of the Regions, European-wide lobbies, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, and the European Commission. In the final part, the chapter is summarized by looking at the central descriptive statistics and the distribution of units of the index.

3.1 Introduction

The qualitative research on regional participation in the EU emphasizes six different channels of participation available to European regions: the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the Committee of the Regions, participation through direct representation in Brussels, and participation in European-wide lobbies that work for regional interests (Greenwood 2003; Tatham 2008; Hooghe and Marks 1996; Bomberg and Peterson 1998; Keating and Hooghe 2006). As discussed in the introduction of the thesis, this variety of participation channels has been widely neglected in quantitative research on regional participation in the EU, where the focus largely has been on one type of regional participation (i.e. mobilization through regional representation offices in Brussels) (Marks et al. 1996; Nielsen and Salk 1998; Marks et al. 2002; Tatham 2010).

In the literature on regional participation, no quantitative measure of participation in EU policy-making can be found that includes all six channels of participation addressed by the qualitative research line. In this thesis, I develop a measure of regional participation by constructing an index consisting of six dummy variables, one for each of the six channels. For every channel, I measure whether or not a region participates through the respective channel. All these variables are therefore dichotomous, and coded either 0 (no participation) or 1 (participation). The scores are then summarized, resulting in a Regional Participation Index (RPI) that measures participation on a scale from 0 through 6, where 0 equals no participation at all, and 6 equals participation through all available channels. In this chapter, I first go through some challenges related to construction and

use of this variable. Then, I go through the operationalizations and data sources of each of the six different component variables.

The construction of such an index is subject to a crucial challenge when it comes to the validity of operationalizations. No matter how it is operationalized, a quantitative measure needs to possess a high degree of construct validity: the measure should correspond highly with the theoretical concept it is meant to measure (Pennings, Keman and Kleinnijenhuis 2006:67). With newly constructed measurements, criteria used to judge the construct validity are difficult to utilize. For instance, it is impossible to test whether the operationalization seems to be a scientifically acceptable measure of the concept (face validity) and whether the data based on this measure corresponds with data from more established measures (correlation validity) (Pennings et al. 2006:67).

Due to the lack of options to assess the validity of the regional participation index and its components, the theoretical discussion of each component variable grows relatively more important. In the following, the variables are therefore discussed closely with regards to how participation in the different channels work, before I present and discuss the operationalizations of each channel. I consider clear theoretical conceptualization and empirical operationalization of the six participation channels the central element in securing high construct validity for the regional participation index in this thesis. It is important to underline, however, that all conceptualizations and operationalizations are based on the qualitative judgements of the author.

In addition to the validity challenges, using an index measure of this type also offers some methodological challenges. First, there is the problem of weighting the different index components. It is not an unlikely thought that participation through one particular channel matters more than participation through another channel with regards to for instance political influence (see Keating and Hooghe 2006:274). A good solution to this would be to weight the relatively more important channels to account for larger parts of the index than the relatively less important ones. This can be done by using statistical techniques like factor analysis, which estimates which components should be emphasized more than others depending on the data. However, weighting of index components should be theory driven (Skog 2006:96). In the case of this index, I find weighting of the different component variables hard to justify theoretically. The reason for this is the complexity of the EU policy-making system: different actors are important at different points in time during the policy process, and their relative importance also varies across different policy areas (Peterson and Shackleton 2006:11). It does not seem possible to develop a key for weighting the relative importance of participation channels that is theoretically justifiable on a general level and not just in

particular policy settings. When there are no clear theoretical justifications, weighting of an index should be avoided (Skog 2006:96). The components of the regional participation index are therefore all given values of equal importance, using the dichotomous level of measurement for each of the six channels.

Second, another challenge lies in the use of an additive index like this as the dependent variable in a multiple regression analysis. Generally speaking, dependent variables in regression analyses must be metric. Metric variables consist of natural values that are not codes, but numbers that in themselves may be directly subjected to mathematical calculation (Midtbø 2007:33), the core element of regression analysis. In this sense, the regional participation variable is an “imperfect” metric variable: it has been constructed by adding the scores of six dummy variables together that all are coded based on qualitative judgements, resulting in a variable that ranges from 0 through 6 (in total seven values). Nevertheless, according to Midtbø (2007:33), this is sufficient for the variable to be used as the dependent variable in regression analysis. When scale variables of this kind have six values or more, they may be used directly in regression analysis as dependent variables, as the number of values is sufficient to perform mathematical operations. Others set this limit even lower, at five values (Pennings et al. 2006:64).

I consider the reliability of this new measure of regional participation to be high. Pennings et al. (2006:67) define measures to be reliable to the extent that they with respect to the same units deliver consistent results. I believe that the operationalizations described in the remainder of the chapter cover the concepts of the six participation channels in a satisfying way, and that theory and data are well-connected. Moreover, if re-measured, the operationalizations should be able to produce consistent results with respect to the units. The variables have been operationalized using official institution data from European Union sources: the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, the Council of the EU, and European-wide lobby organizations. In general, data from European institutions are relatively trustworthy, and the methods of data collection highly transparent.

3.2 Operationalizations

3.2.1 Representation office in Brussels

Although office establishment in Brussels does not really constitute participation in any formal legislative procedures in the EU, many scholars believe that direct representation in “the capital of the EU” may matter for regional influence in policy-making (Keating and Hooghe 2006:276;

Tatham 2008:507; Bomberg and Peterson 1998:228; Hooghe and Marks 1996:86). According to Keating and Hooghe (2006:276), such offices of course play an important role as information bureaus towards their regional politicians at home, but also in providing regional viewpoints to the European Commission. In this way, as liaisons between regional authorities and the Commission, representation offices might have influence on policy discussion and development in the EU. Results from surveys done among regional Brussels offices demonstrate that both acting as liaison between the region and the EU and influencing policy by direct participation and lobbying, are considered very important by the regions themselves (Marks et al. 2002:2). Furthermore, Tatham (2008:504) underlines that the Commission is an institution that is both open and receptive to regional input when designing policies, particularly at early stages of the process. Hence, direct representation by setting up offices in Brussels is an important channel of regional participation in the EU.

Measuring such representation in policy-making is relatively straight-forward: either a region has an office, or it has not. The representation office variable uses a measure that has been used in earlier quantitative research on regional mobilization in Brussels. It is a dummy variable of 0 and 1, where 1 indicates the existence of a regional office in Brussels and 0 indicates the lack thereof. The data stem from the official Regional office contact directory produced by the Committee of the Regions and the European Commission after the Open Days, October 2009⁵.

3.2.2 Committee of the Regions

With the establishment of the Committee of the Regions, European regional authorities suddenly found themselves with a formal channel of participation in the policy-making structures of the EU. Although this channel has been dismissed as weak and muted (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:225), it has a clearly defined place within the policy process of the Union. Since the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Commission, the Council and the Parliament are obliged to consult the CoR in a series of policy areas (Keating and Hooghe 2006:277). In addition, the CoR may issue opinions directly to the Commission and the Council on its own initiative. A weak organ or not, this makes the CoR a useful tool for promoting regional interests. In cases where the Commission seeks allies, the CoR may turn out to be an important actor if it should have a view that allows it to join with the Commission. And, in cases where the Commission lacks a clear view on particular policy, the CoR may be able to influence the policy development by serving as a test board for policy suggestions (Tatham 2008:506). There clearly seems to be a potential in the CoR to influence Union policy, and

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/od2009/doc/pdf/partners/All_partners.pdf

participation through this channel has a potential for being an important influence route for European regions.

Participation for all regions in the CoR is not guaranteed, however. Depending on the size of the member-state, all countries get a share of seats in the CoR. These seats are allocated nationally using different methods. In some countries, regions themselves decide who to send to the CoR, whilst in other countries national government chooses the CoR delegation (Keating and Hooghe 2006:277). This result in participation being uneven among regions across the EU: some regions have representatives in the CoR, some do not. The CoR variable is operationalized according to this very point. It measures whether or not a region has a representative in the delegation that is appointed to the CoR. Regions that do have a representative in its country's delegation are given the value 1, while regions who do not are given the value 0. The data material used for this is extracted from the official member list of the Committee⁶. The current CoR members are chosen for the period 2009-2014, equal to the election period of the European Parliament.

3.2.3 European-wide lobbies

Both Keating and Hooghe (2006) and Tatham (2008) discuss lobbying as a way in which regions may influence EU decision-making. There are several lobbies that work for regional influence on politics, both in the EU and more globally. The two that have a specified agenda of lobbying the EU directly are the Council of Communes and Regions of Europe (CEMR) and the Assembly of European Regions (AER) (Keating and Hooghe 2006:277; Tatham 2008:508).

It remains somewhat unclear if regional interest lobbies have particularly much influence in the EU (Tatham 2008:508). While some scholars maintain that the existence of such lobbies reflects the importance of regions and regional influence in the EU (Weyand 1997 and Keating 1998 in Tatham 2008:508), others argue that regional interest lobbies have no real influence on the policy-making that goes on in the Union (Borras 1993 and Greenwood 1997 in Tatham 2008:508). Bomberg and Peterson (1998:230) argue that although the impact of lobby organizations in the EU may be hard to assess, it is likely that EU policy-makers are more sympathetic towards aggregated views that they know many actors support. This is largely confirmed by Tatham (2008:509), who in his interviews with representatives in the Commission gets affirmation that the large regional lobbies often manage to influence key players in the EU, at least periodically. Empirically, there is some evidence

⁶ <http://cormembers.cor.europa.eu/cormembers.aspx?critName=&critCountry=AT&critFunction=MEM|ALT&critGroup=&critDossier=&iaction=Search>

that the participation of regional lobbies has affected policy outcomes. In the early 1990s, the AER was one of the strongest agitators for the principle of subsidiarity and the Committee of the Regions. Their introduction indicates that lobbies might have some impact on policy-making and development in the EU. More generally, regional lobbies such as the AER have had close working relationships with the Commission, not unlike the relationships between regional offices and the Commission (Hooghe and Marks 1996:87). It seems that even though the actual influence of European-wide lobbies on EU policy is uncertain, their participation matters in many occasions of policy-making.

The European-wide lobby variable is operationalized according to whether or not regions take part in the two main regional lobbies that have an active agenda towards the EU: the CEMR and the AER. The variable is a dummy, where 0 indicates no membership in any of these lobbies, and 1 indicates lobby membership (in one or both). The data are gathered from the websites of the CEMR⁷ and the AER⁸ in December 2010.

3.2.4 European Parliament

With some exceptions (Bomberg and Peterson 1998; Tatham 2008), the European Parliament has often been neglected as a channel of regional participation in the EU. However, because the influence of the EP is increasing with the extended use of co-decision, it should be considered an important channel that regions may use to promote their political interests within the formalized policy-making structures of the Union (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:226). Tatham's (2008:505) findings in interviews with Commission representatives show that European Parliament members (MEPs) are considered to have considerable political leverage in the Union, and that this can be effectively used to promote regional concerns in EU legislation. According to these studies, the EP constitutes a channel that regions may influence policy through. Therefore, it is included in the construction of this index of regional participation.

The variable is operationalized according to whether or not regions participate directly in the EP, through representation by regional parties. The value 0 is given to regions where a regional party does not participate in the EP and the value 1 to those regions where a regional party does participate. The cut-off point as to what to consider a regional party follows Hepburn's (2008) study of the effects of Europeanization on regional party mobilization. Here, a clear line is drawn between

7 http://www.ccre.org/docs/list_of_members_en.pdf

8 <http://www.aer.eu/about-aer/aer-members/member-regions.html>

regional parties that are truly concerned with regional politics and regional branches of state-wide parties. Whereas the motivation of regional parties is a genuine interest in promoting regional strength and ideas in a European context, regional branches of state-wide parties are driven mostly by the wish to compete with regional parties in the national context and by preventing them from ownership of the European dimension of regional politics (Hepburn 2008:538). MEPs from truly regional parties are considered to be working for regional interests in a way that MEPs from regional branches of state-wide parties are not. The data used to measure this have been drawn from the European Union's list of parties that have seats in the EP⁹. Each unit has been given values according to the above criteria of what to consider a regional party: 0 indicates no regional party representation in the EP, 1 indicates that a regional party occupies a seat in the European Parliament.

3.2.5 The Council of the European Union

The notion that the Council of the European Union may be used to promote regional interests is a well established issue within research on regional participation in the EU (Keating and Hooghe 2006; Bomberg and Peterson 1998; Tatham 2008). The Treaty on the European Union specifies that a member-state may be represented in the Council by actors of a sub-national government, given that these actors have ministerial status. When participating in the Council, however, regional ministers officially do so as representatives of their member-state, and not their region. It could be argued then, that this type of regional participation is not regional at all, but national (Keating and Hooghe 2006:274). Tatham (2008:500-501) argues that this view is too simplistic: it underestimates the political capabilities of many regional politicians. First of all, the mere presence in the CoEU of regional ministers matters, as this most often indicates that the issue on the agenda is of regional importance. Secondly, the participation is important to regions because they may use Council meetings to issue their opinions to the Commission and other member-states at the margins of meetings. Thirdly, when regional ministers participate in the Council regularly, they are usually recognized as serious actors, and are in turn treated as such (Tatham 2008:501). Even though regional participation in the CoEU is not formally regional, it still matters to the regions that do participate on a regular basis.

The CoEU variable is operationalized in the following way: using official data from the Council of the European Union¹⁰ on who is representing the different member-states on a regular basis, a

⁹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/public/staticDisplay.do?id=45&pageRank=4&language=EN>

¹⁰ <http://europa.eu/whoiswho/public/index.cfm?fuseaction=idea.hierarchy&nodeID=3540&lang=en>

dummy variable has been constructed. The value 1 indicates that politicians from the respective region participate regularly in the Council, whereas 0 indicates that regional representatives do not participate regularly in the Council. What constitutes regular participation is here defined by the Council of the EU, who report lists of representatives that participate in Council meetings on a recurrent basis. Although this is not ideal, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to measure who participates when in the many meetings of the Council of the EU.

Due to the fact of how representatives must enjoy ministerial status to participate in the Council, this operationalization could lead to some measurement error relating to federal structures in member-states. The ministerial status clause puts federal states such as Germany and Belgium, and their respective regions, in a more powerful position than non-federal regions when it comes to participation in the Council (Hooghe and Marks 1996:77). At worst, this operationalization does not measure participation in the Council, but simply federalism. Nevertheless, since the CoEU channel has clear theoretical justification as an important channel of potential regional influence on policy-making, the variable is included in the index.

3.2.6 European Commission

As the Union's sole proposer of new legislation, the European Commission is a powerful actor in the EU. It therefore has a potential for being an important channel for regional influence on legislation. Due to the fact that the Commission is relatively small in size compared to national administration, external contribution and advice from small actors is highly valued when developing new legislation (Broscheid and Coen 2003:167). Based on such an *open door policy*, Tatham (2008:504) considers the possibilities for regions to influence policy by presenting their viewpoints to Commission officials to be quite good. Moreover, the Commission tends to have considerable powers in policy issues that are important to regional authorities (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:223). Greenwood (2003:241) adds that the different EU departments (DGs) constitute important access points for regions to the EU policy process. DG Regio has for instance developed strong links with regional and local authority interests. Through consultation procedures the Commission initiate regularly when developing legislation, regions may forward opinions and suggestions to the EC.

This variable is operationalized using a consultation procedure from the EC that is well fit to measure regional participation. I use the consultation procedure for the “Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion – Turning Territorial Diversity into Strength” as a proxy measure for participation

through the European Commission influence channel. During this consultation, the EC received 97 opinions from European regions, communes and cities. The value 0 is given the units that have not contributed to the consultation, while the value 1 is given the units that have contributed. The data have been gathered from the websites of the European Commission¹¹

Large-N measurements of participation through the European Commission have not been conducted in previous research on regional participation. This proxy offers a measure of the phenomenon. It does not give a complete picture of how regions interact with the Commission in different consultations in the long run. It does, however, show the amount of regional involvement in an issue that must be considered relevant for all regions across the EU. Legislative consultations in other policy areas are also open for regional authorities, but these consultations are more often than not connected to specific sector interests and therefore not relevant for regions on a whole. A measure based on these consultations would provide an image of how regions lobby the EC biased towards regions with special interests related to for instance immigration or agriculture.

In addition, this proxy for participation in the Commission has a further strength. The consultation for the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion was open until February 2009. This means that the consultation was open for the entire EU27, and not a smaller selection of older member-states and regions. If I were to operationalize this channel more broadly by using more observations (i.e. consultations) I would have to use older observations. That would exclude regions from newer member-states. I find such a loss of units more problematic with regards to the research question than using a proxy variable for regional participation through the EC.

3.3 Summary - Regional Participation Index descriptives

When summarized, the six component variables of participation in the EP, the European Commission, the Council of the EU, the Committee of the Regions, European-wide regional lobbies and through sub-national representation offices make up an index of regional participation with values ranging from 0 to 6. The interpretation of the index is very straight-forward: when the values increase, regional participation is higher; when they decrease, participation is lower. Every index value indicates the total number of channels the units participate in. A value of zero is equal

¹¹ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/terco/contrib_en.htm

to participation in no channels, whereas six is equal to participation in all available channels. The two tables below present the central descriptive statistics of the RPI¹².

Table 1: Frequencies for Regional Participation Index.

Value	Frequency	Percentage
0	40	17.2
1	48	20.6
2	75	32.2
3	37	15.9
4	30	12.9
5	3	1.3
6	0	0
Total	233	100

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for Regional Participation Index

Mean	Std. deviation	Minimum	Maximum	N
1.91	1.3	0	5	233

As the first table demonstrates, the frequencies of the RPI are concentrated around the lower five values of the index. A total of 230 regions, 98.7 per cent of all the units, are found in this interval. The mean of 1.91 indicates that, on average, a regional authority participates through no more than two of the channels measured by the index. The relatively high standard deviation indicates that there is considerable variation around the central tendency, however. This is further demonstrated by the distribution of frequencies above and below the mean value. This distribution of values gives confidence in using the Regional Participation Index as the dependent variable in this research project. As a general rule in building causal research designs, a dependent variable must represent sufficient variation for regression estimates to be statistically robust. Moreover, if variation on the dependent variable is constant or close to constant, the researcher might find oneself in a situation where there exists no possible way to uncover the causal effects one is interested in (King, Keohane and Verba 1994:109).

¹² The complete list of index scores and scores on each of the six components for all regions is found in the appendix.

4.0 A STRUCTURAL MODEL FOR EXPLAINING REGIONAL PARTICIPATION

This chapter describes a structural explanatory model for regional participation in European Union policy-making that is founded in Europeanization theory. The theoretical underpinnings of the three central dimensions considered to influence why regions participate in the EU are presented in detail: resources, political autonomy and identity. Based on results from previous research, I consider what effect each of the three dimensions are expected to have on participation. The chapter is concluded by a discussion of alternative explanatory approaches to regional participation, and of the challenges these approach have when it comes to finding satisfying and testable empirical data.

4.1 Introduction

The Europeanization perspective is a theoretical perspective with a strong focus on structures. Changes in structures at the EU level lead to changes in governance and structures on the national level; changes that in turn affect the possibilities regions have to participate more directly on the supranational level (Olsen 2002, 2007). As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the degree of participation among European regions varies a lot, and the question of course, is what it is that causes this variation. Both Bartolini (2006) and Kohler-Koch (2005) suggest that the answer to this question lies in the domestic structures in the member-states.

In his discussion of the mechanisms of Europeanization, Bartolini (2006:9) stresses the fact that exit and voice options are *unevenly* distributed across the European Union. European regions are simply not endowed with identical structural capacity to exit and voice in this new system of permeable national boundaries (Bartolini 2006:9). Kohler-Koch raises the same issue, when pointing out that the openings of exit and voice will have varying effects in different member-states, depending on the structures that hold national polities together (Kohler-Koch 2005:8). A good explanatory model of regional participation based on Europeanization theory should therefore give an account of the structures in the member-states that determine the use of exit and voice options on the EU level.

In this part, I present such a structural explanatory model of regional participation in EU policy-making. The model incorporates the three main structural explanatory dimensions in the participation literature: resources, political autonomy and identity. These dimensions all relate to how exit and voice in the EU is used by European regions. By looking at the structural

characteristics of a region, the model seeks to uncover the circumstances under which a region will be able to make use of the exit and voice options opened by the EU. Whereas financial resources and legislation at the supranational level provoke participation through their attractiveness to regional authorities, the position regions have domestically with regards to economy and politics is in this model hypothesized to affect whether or not regions manage to participate in the EU. Whether regions exit the national realm and exercise voice in the EU, depends on the resources they have available and their political capacities to act autonomously from their national governments. Moreover, regional identity is hypothesized to have an effect on the degree to which regions participate. If allegiance to the region is stronger than that to the nation, it may be expected that regional authorities will have less difficulty and fewer obstacles in transcending member-state borders and accessing the EU policy-making system more directly.

Analytically, the build-up of this model brings some interesting aspects into the thesis. First and foremost, it gives the analysis the ability to test empirically the structural perspective on regional participation, for which there in the literature has been expressed a clear need (Kohler-Koch 2005:17; Bartolini 2006:1). By testing a full explanatory model in a regression analysis, instead of simply testing single explanatory variables as has been done in previous research, it is possible to discuss the strength the Europeanization perspective as a whole has in explaining regional participation and state by-passing. Furthermore, such an empirical analysis offers the possibility of exploring the different dimensions and the effect they have on a measure of participation that has a broader reach than earlier measures. Ultimately, it makes it possible to test the different explanatory dimensions against each other in competing models. In this way, one can investigate whether for instance resources matter more for participation than do capacities to act autonomously or the degree of regional identity.

In addition, this focus may give insight into what to expect of regional participation in the EU in the future. By looking at the explanatory strength of different factors, it may be established which type of structures matter the most. Some variables in the model relate to relatively fixed structures such as the degree of federalism in member-states, while others relate to more fluctuating factors such as regional finances, government partisanship and regional population; factors that may be actively influenced by regions or that change over time. Interpreting the analysis in this way might give some indication of how regional participation in the EU can be expected to turn out in coming years.

The following three parts present the theoretical foundations of how three structural dimensions – resources, autonomy and identity - are expected to affect regional participation. In the final part of the chapter, the entire explanatory model is summarized.

4.2 Power in numbers: how size affects participation

In their work on the strategies of regional representation offices in Brussels, Marks et al. (2002:9) make the claim that finances and size matters for regions when it comes to influencing EU policy-making. According to Keating and Hooghe (2006:283), the regions with the highest influence in the EU policy system, are those that are most economically advanced. In turn, under the logic of this thesis that influence must be preceded by participation, this implies that regions with large financial resources and large populations participate more in policy-making than less well-off regions.

Several scholars see financial resources as a major facilitator for exit from the domestic political domain. Resources are an essential ingredient when it comes to mobilizing collective action in pursuit of collective goals (McCarthy and Zaid 1977 in Marks et al. 1996:169). With a goal of maximizing a region's influence, such mobilization could lead to numerous types of regional exit from the domestic realm: office mobilization, trying to influence the European Commission, participation in European-wide lobbies and so on. Quite simply, money matters when it comes to the capacity regional authorities have to act independently from their national government (Tatham 2010:79). According to Bomberg (1994 in Marks et al. 2002:9) regions with high budgets can afford to employ a larger and more professional staff, that can work actively and effectively vis-à-vis European institutions. And, regions that have the resources to employ such staff will be better equipped to use their voice more effectively in the EU system (Jeffery 1996 in Marks et al. 2002:9). In all, in order to understand what leads to regional participation in the EU, finances are an important factor. The richer sub-state entities are, the more frequently they might bypass their state-level governments (Tatham 2010:80).

In previous research on how regions mobilize in Brussels, Marks et al.'s (1996:179) initial findings show that the greater the financial resources of a sub-national government, the greater the likelihood that it will be represented in Brussels. Nielsen and Salk (1998:244) find that absolute size when it comes to regional financial resources is a definitive asset in producing participation, and that the effect of funds is statistically significant when controlling for other explanatory variables. The findings are largely confirmed by Marks et al. (2002:13) in their study on mobilization in Brussels.

Given the effect financial resources are confirmed to have on mobilization, which is one of the constitutive elements of the Regional Participation Index, it seems reasonable to expect the effect to be similar when it comes to participation measured in a broader manner as well.

Furthermore, the size of the population in a region may also affect the ability regions have to exit the domestic context. The basic argument for this is presented by Nielsen and Salk (1998:238). Larger groups should be more able than smaller groups to influence decision-makers in political systems such as the EU because they are more known and more visible. Hence, they are able to promote their causes in a more effective way. Tatham (2010:79) draws on an empirical study of Dutch municipalities by de Rooij (2002) to underline the population size effect. According to de Rooij (2002 in Tatham 2010:79), large Dutch municipalities deal actively with the EU in an array of areas. As the size of the municipalities decreases, so does their interaction with the EU; larger populations seem to lead to more participation at the supranational level.

Conversely, though, Nielsen and Salk (1998:238) also argue that the size of a region might be a drawback when it comes to participation. Large regions are harder to organize, and when the population increases, so does the likelihood that this very population will be more diverse and less homogenous when it comes to defining regional interests. This, in turn, could make exit from the national context and more participation in EU policy-making less likely. Previous research on the presumed negative effect of population size, however, has provided non-significant results (Nielsen and Salk 1998:244; Tatham 2010:85).

Summarized then, it is expected that the size of a region, measured in financial resources and population, has a positive effect on the degree to which the regional authorities manage to participate in EU policy-making structures. Being large facilitates exit and improves regional capacity to act towards the EU more directly. More financial resources give regions space to act independently from their respective national governments. In particular, richer regions have the possibility to hire more specialized staff that works concretely with EU issues, whereas regional administrators from less well staffed regions must focus on multiple issues contemporaneously; regional, domestic and European. Moreover, populous regions are expected to have an advantage over poorly inhabited regions when it comes to participation. Alongside financial resources, the leverage and bargaining power that comes from representing many people is likely to contribute to more participation in EU policy-making.

4.3 Regional autonomy: shy at home, mute in Brussels

The explanatory dimension, upon which there seems to be the strongest agreement among regional participation scholars, is that political autonomy strongly affects a region's involvements in the EU. There is an important dividing line between regions that have true constitutional rights and regions that are mostly administrative in character when it comes to participation (Marks et al. 1996; Nielsen and Salk 1998; Marks et al. 2002; Greenwood 2003; Keating and Hooghe 2006; Moore 2008; Tatham 2010). According to Nielsen and Salk (1998:241), regions that are strong and that manage to get involved at the European level, are those with high levels of political autonomy and established governmental structures. The existence of such fixed structures at the regional level facilitates the expression of regional interests on the EU level; good possibilities of voice in a domestic context often goes together with good voice opportunities in an European context. In member-states where regions have a strong institutional position, they have become important actors in the EU. Vice-versa, where they are weak domestically, regions have to a very limited extent bypassed their national government and expressed their voice directly at the European level (Keating and Hooghe 2006:281).

Autonomy structures matter because the policies of the EU are relatively more important for highly self-controlled regions than for more centrally controlled regions. Marks et al. (1996:170) claim that the degree to which competencies overlap between the sub-national and supranational levels of government is a decisive factor for how regional authorities will try to influence policy-making. Regions with a significant degree of political autonomy will be more directly affected by EU policy than regions with little political autonomy (Marks et al. 1996:170). In Marks et al. (2002:9-10), this point is clarified further:

Strong regions have both more to gain by trying to influence EU policy and more to lose if they do not. They have more to gain because many EU policies lie within their competence. They have more to lose because if they are unable to operate effectively in Europe they face the prospect of being outflanked by national governments. While subnational governments in many EU countries have established prerogatives in their respective national arenas, they are not entrenched at the European level.

Earlier research on the effect of regional political autonomy on participation shows findings that are consistently strong and significant. Regions that enjoy distinctive political rights within the national political realm are clearly more active in Brussels (Marks et al. 1996:186). Nielsen and Salk

(1998:247) call political autonomy a crucial determinant of the organizational potential a region has. Regional autonomy is the strongest predictor of regional state bypassing in the EU (Nielsen and Salk 1998:247). The position regions have within their national polities is important when explaining variation in how regions participate in the European Union (Marks et al. 2002:15).

Others suggest that although a strong legal-constitutional position at home often is critical factor for participation, it by no means guarantees access and influence in Brussels (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:221). Regional capacities to build coalitions with both national and European actors may be just as important a predictor for regional participation as political autonomy (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:221). Indeed, Jeffery (2000:13) proposes that scholars should put more emphasis on explanations that go beyond the constitutional position of regions. One should, according to Jeffery, look at the quality of the intergovernmental relations between region and central state, not only the legal provisions of such relations. Furthermore, the level of entrepreneurship in regions, and the popular legitimacy of the European policy mobilization of the regions should be accounted for (Jeffery 2000:14).

Interestingly, the most recent finding concerning the relationship between political autonomy and regional participation done by Tatham (2010:83) goes against findings in previous research. High degree of autonomy leads to less, not more, state bypassing from regions (Tatham 2010:86). Moreover, the findings indicate that the content and quality of the *co-operation between regions and central government* might matter more than presumed in earlier research. Although departing from the same theoretical perspective as Marks et al. (1996) and Nielsen and Salk (1998), Tatham finds that rather than leading to more direct participation in the EU, political autonomy leads to more frequent co-operation with national government in European matters (Tatham 2010:83).

Despite Tatham's finding of autonomy having a negative effect on participation, there is a strongly confirmed relationship between political autonomy and regional participation in the literature. The general hypothesis is that high degrees of political autonomy will have a positive effect on regional participation. Strong constitutional regions, whose legislative and administrative competencies overlap with EU policy areas, have stronger incentives to participate in the policy-making of the Union. Also, the fact that such regions are very used to formulating their interests in the national context increases the likelihood that they will do this in an effective way also on a European level. The recent counterintuitive findings by Tatham add further interest to testing the hypothesis of whether autonomous regions participate more in EU policy-making. It could be that political autonomy as predictor of participation has grown relatively less strong with respect to other

explanatory dimensions during the period from the first analyses of mobilization and those conducted more recently on nation-state bypassing.

4.4 Regional identity – does feeling different make a difference?

What role identity plays for participation is an important question in EU regional research. In European history, a common cultural identity has been one of the most important structures nations have relied on for building strong states (Bartolini 2004:20-25). Likewise, as a means to build a strong Union enjoying a high degree of popular legitimacy, identity has become important for the EU. Ever since the famous Jean Monnet quote from 1958, stating that “no one falls in love with a common market”, the Union has sought to win the hearts and minds of European citizens, by introducing strong symbolic elements like a common flag and an official hymn. The success these symbols have had is questionable at best, and a common European identity has not materialized to any substantial degree. Cultural bonds to the sub-national regions, however, seem to be far more widespread across Europe.

According to Bartolini (2004:24), the sentiments of loyalty that citizens have towards the group they belong to (i.e. their nation), should normally be regarded as an element that increases the costs of exit. Where national identity is strong, it constitutes an obstacle for regions to use exit options provided by EU resources and legislation. Yet, he adds, sentiments of loyalty are often stronger at the sub-national level than at the national one, which might facilitate regional exit from the national arena. Wherever the strength of regional loyalty exceeds the strength of national loyalty, direct regional action towards the EU could increase (Bartolini 2004:32).

Related to this loyalty dimension, Marks et al. (1996:170) identify two main sources of friction between regional and central state authority that may lead to more direct regional participation in the EU. The first source of friction is the existence of multiple territorial, cultural and linguistic identities in a state (Marks et al. 1996:170). In the EU, the legitimacy of the state executive to dominate a state's influence is based on the idea that state executives are the democratic expression of national interests (Taylor 1991 in Marks et al. 1996:170). In member-states where there exist multiple group identities, which is the case in many states across the EU, this idea of national executives that are representative for all cultures in that state may create friction between region and state. If citizens of a region feel that the representatives of the central government do not really represent their identity, loyalty to the state could become very weak. Strong regional identities that differ from other identities in a specific state should in turn facilitate regional use of exit and voice,

because it makes mobilization of distinct regional interest more likely (Nielsen and Salk 1998:241). In regions where attachment to the region is high and exceeds the loyalty to the state, it is expected that participation in EU policy-making is higher.

The second source of friction Marks et al. identify is political, and relates to partisan differences between the national and sub-national levels of government. When parties that are in opposition to national government constitute the regional authority, they will try to make more use of opportunities of exit and voice in order to express their opinion on EU policy to the EU more directly (Marks et al. 1996:170). As political loyalty decrease, the likelihood of regions bypassing the state increases (Tatham 2010:79).

Results from previous research demonstrate that when it comes to the effect of regional identity on participation, both cultural and political divergence from national identity matters. Marks et al. (1996:185) show how regions where inhabitants perceive themselves as distinct culturally all share common traits of strong participation in the EU, whereas regions where such perception is weaker share the same traits of weak participation. Regions with a distinctive cultural character and strong regional attachment such as the Basque Country, Catalonia and Scotland are typical examples of regions that seem able to bypass their national governments (Marks et al. 1996:185). Nielsen and Salk (1998:246) confirm this finding in their work, where they show that regional identification has a small, but strongly significant effect on regional representation in Brussels. With regards to political divergence, Tatham (2010:79) reports of strong patterns of regional participation in the EU from regions where there are partisan differences between regional and national government. This same result is found by Marks et al. (1996:185). The political divergence measure turns out to have a strong effect on the way regions act in relation to the EU, an effect that is statistically significant across all tested models (Marks et al. 1996:179). When looking closer at specific cases across the EU, the argument is given further strength. Keating (1999:12) finds that partisan differences between regional and national government plays a central role for the degree of state bypassing both in Spanish and British regions, and that direct regional action at the EU level increases when parties in opposition to each other control national and regional government respectively.

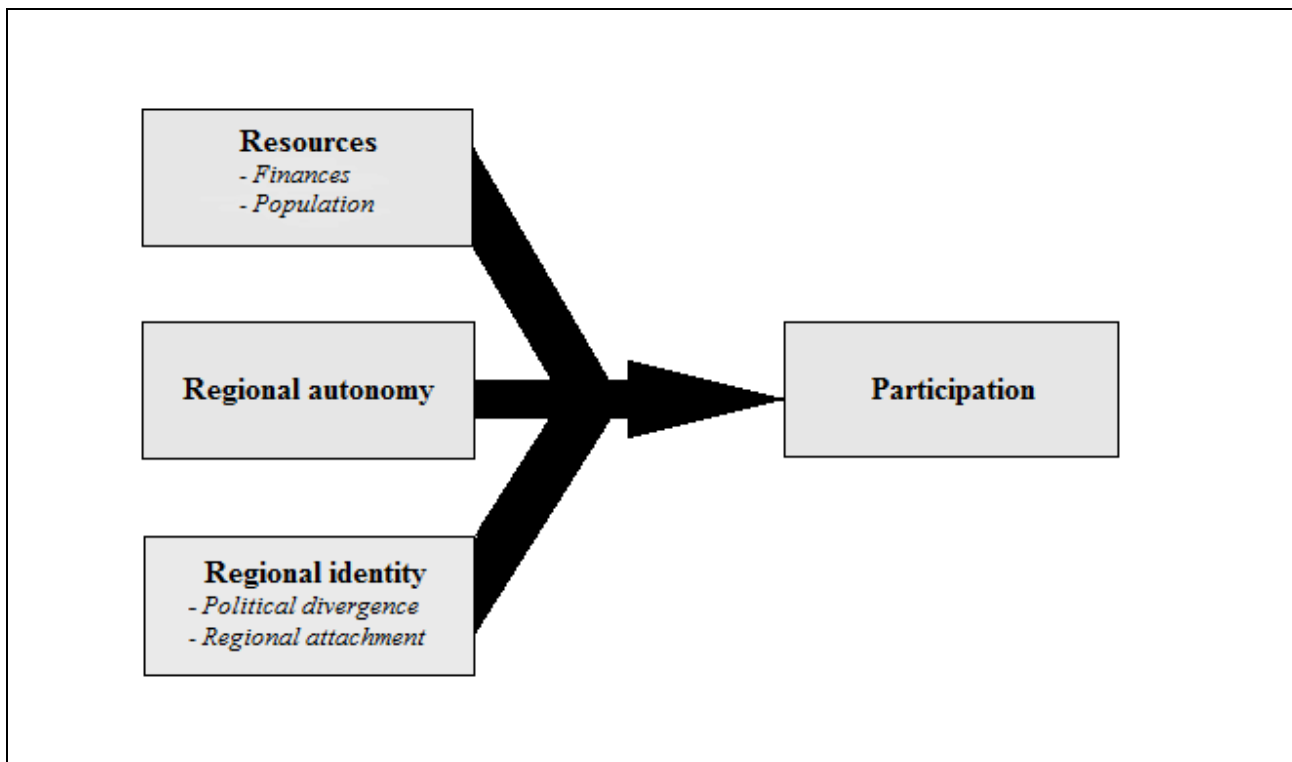
It is expected that regional identity has a positive effect on participation. When regional identity is stronger than national identity, regional participation in the EU is higher. When cultural differences between region and state are large, and attachment to the region is stronger than that to the state, regions are driven to more direct participation in order to promote policies that secure their cultural and linguistic characteristics. Likewise, if political differences between regional and national

government are large, regional government will try to influence EU policy-making directly. In this way, it may be possible to make their region's opinion heard in the EU, despite the possibility that the national influence channel is dominated by political rivals.

4.5 Model summary

The three structures discussed above constitute the explanatory model of regional participation in this research project. The model offers a way of understanding how and why exit and voice options are unevenly distributed among European regions, and why loyalty to the member-states varies. These variations among regions are hypothesized to depend on each region's resources, its degree of political autonomy, and the strength of regional identity. On the resource dimension, the model considers the influence of financial resources as well as population on regional participation. For identity, both regional attachment and political divergence from national government is included. The model is summarized in the figure below (Fig. 1):

Figure 1: Structural explanatory model for regional participation



Resource strength is the central facilitator for exit for European regions. Richer and more populous regions tend to be more able to mobilize and act independently from national government than less resourceful regions, who should be less capable of operating directly on the supranational political level.

Political autonomy on the domestic level is expected to make it easier for regions to act autonomously also on the European level. The more autonomous regions are, the more are they affected by EU policy. Highly autonomous regions often have a large set of political competencies related to law-making and implementation. Where competencies and responsibility for implementation overlap between the EU and regional authorities, the use of voice is much more likely than it is in regions that do not share political competencies with the EU.

Regional identity matters for the degree of loyalty in European regions. In cases where citizens feel strongly attached to their region and not so much to the state, regional bypassing of national government is expected to occur more often than in regions where attachment to region and state is more balanced. Moreover, where regional authorities differ from national government in partisanship, direct action at the European level seems more likely and more necessary as a means to promote specific regional political interests. Wherever regional identity is very strong, loyalty towards national government and national policy is hypothesized to be weaker than in regions where regional attachment is less important and the partisan affiliation of regional authorities converge with that of national government.

This explanatory model is expected to be able to account for much of the variation in regional participation in EU policy-making. The three dimensions in the model connect it to the exit, voice and loyalty mechanisms found in the Europeanization perspective, by looking at how resources and autonomy create an unequal distribution of possibilities for regions to exit from national polity and voice at the European level, and at how identity produces varying degrees of loyalty to the state. Based on the results from similar previous research, and on the strongly confirmed relationships in both quantitative and qualitative literature between domestic structures and participation, I expect the collective predictive power of the model to be high relative to the standards in quantitative research.

As for the inner workings of the model, evidence from earlier research suggests that the autonomy dimension should have a relatively larger impact on participation than resources and identity. Furthermore, there is some indication that identity has both more effect than resources and that this

effect is more significant. There are, however, no clear ontological and theoretical reasons to believe that the internal dynamics of the structural model necessarily will follow the pattern of these previous findings. As demonstrated in the discussions of the three dimensions, neither of the three takes into consideration any possible alternations in effect as a result of the influence of other variables. Moreover, there does not seem to be any empirical trends among European regions suggesting that the three dimensions are more or less important with respect to each other when it comes to explaining participation in EU policy-making. Ultimately, it should be emphasized once more that the relationships between participation and the different explanatory dimensions confirmed in earlier research, have been discovered using a much narrower understanding of participation than the one used in this research project.

Therefore, the analytical focus in this thesis is on testing the strength of the three central explanatory dimensions in the model, and on testing the entire explanatory model as such in order to find out how much of the variation in regional participation it is able to account for. Such an approach offers a solid possibility to assess the Europeanization perspective empirically. In addition, the thesis focuses on *exploring* how the different dimensions in the Europeanization perspective function together, without posing any clear hypotheses for which there are no satisfactory theoretical defence. Also, although previous findings suggest certain patterns of more and less important explanatory dimensions, the measure this thesis uses to capture regional participation deviates quite much from the measure used in previous research; regional mobilization in Brussels. Hence, I start the analysis without any hypotheses about the relative effects on participation of the three explanatory dimensions with respect to each other. Whether there actually are any such differences, will eventually be uncovered and explored when the analysis is conducted.

4.6 Alternative explanations to participation – can they supplement the structural approach?

This analysis focuses on testing the effect of structures on regional participation in the EU. However, several scholars emphasize alternative theoretical approaches as a means to explain the participation of regions in the policy-making of the Union. This part presents some alternative approaches found in the literature. Common to these approaches is that although they bring interesting theoretical aspects into the field, they all meet a series of methodological challenges. This makes them difficult to use in quantitative empirical research, and their explanatory strength thus difficult to assess. This will be further discussed later in this part.

A first category of alternative explanatory factors is found in what can be referred to as the *ability* of regional authorities. The capabilities regional authority has in leadership, effective administration and in responding to the challenges regions meet in confrontation with the EU is likely to improve prospects for participating in and influencing European policy-making (Jeffery 2000:14). Regions with ambitious leaders that are committed to using the possibilities offered by the EU as a part of their policy, will be far more active in trying to participate in the EU as a means to influence the design of the resources they consume.

Moreover, the ability regional leaders have to build strong coalitions with national government and with regions in other EU countries may have consequences for participation and influence on EU policy (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:229). According to Pollack (1995:363), the degree to which regions manage to bypass national government in EU policy matters, depends largely on whether national government is a gatekeeper or coalition partner. In instances where regional authorities are able to provide national government with expertise and information they otherwise would not have, regions would have significantly better access to EU policy-making (Jeffery 2000:14). By building such “competency coalitions” with national government, and thereby influencing national EU policy, regions increase their participation in EU policy-making. In general, entrepreneurship in regional authority could be an important differentiating variable in regional participation (Jeffery 2000:15). Having highly competent regional politicians and administrators might make a considerable difference for regional participation in EU policy-making.

A second branch of alternative explanation for participation focuses on the socializing effects EU institutions have on the actors within the EU system. Anchored in constructivist theory, scholars maintain that institutions influence and shape the behavior, preferences and identities of actors (Pollack 2001:234; Christiansen 1996:94). In their view, the process of European integration is expected to have a transformative impact on the very system of European states and on the units that constitute them (Christiansen, Jørgensen and Wiener 1999:529). The interaction between EU institutions and European actors such as regional authorities is believed to have an effect on the way the actors behave towards the institutions, and on how they seek to use the institutions in order to fulfill their preferences. Through contact with European policy-making structures, regions are inducted into a political system where they gradually learn “the rules of the game”, and start acting according to them (Checkel 2005:804). As regions learn more of the EU system, they will also seek to participate more in it. The learning process, and hence more participation, depends on issues such as duration of the socialization, the frequency with which regions are in contact with EU, and the size of resources at stake for regions (Hooghe 2005:872). The longer and more frequent regional

exposure to the EU is, the more likely it is that regions will seek more participation. In short, some participation in EU policy-making channels will eventually lead to more participation due to the socializing effect the political system has on its actors.

The two alternative explanations suggested above are both anchored in strong theoretical traditions. The idea that strong entrepreneurs have a large impact on how groups and political organizations act, dates back to the 1960s (Wagner 1966), and has remained in the literature as an important element in describing diversity in collective action among different groups (Shepsle and Bonchek 1997). The socialization approach has been included in much work on the EU in recent years as a part of constructivist theory building (Pollack 2001; Jupille, Caporaso and Checkel 2003). Moreover, it remains a central component in learning theory more generally. Being strong and well-founded theoretical perspectives, it is not unlikely that if tested for, entrepreneurship, coalition power and socialization could help explain even more of the variation in the dependent variable. However, the approaches remain highly theoretical, and empirical studies of political ability, capacity to build coalitions and socialization have been few (Pollack 2001). For quantitative research in particular, the problem is that good measures and satisfying and reliable data are hard to construct and demanding to gather.

First of all: what should be measured? What it is that constitutes strong leadership, effective administration and ability to respond to challenges from the EU in a way that benefits the regions is by no means given. Views on which components to include in such a measure are likely to vary among scholars, and it could be a challenging task identifying a set of criteria that actually covers the concept of political ability in a satisfying way. The same goes for the socialization concept. Which processes of the EU it is that makes regions alter their behavior towards the Union as they learn how EU institutions work, is unclear.

Secondly, if criteria are found that cover the two phenomena sufficiently, where should data be found? There exist no quantitative data for the ability aspects such as leadership, administrative efficiency and responsiveness to EU challenges on the regional level. Likewise are there no existing measures of the influence regions have on national EU policy through political coalitions. Even in cases where it is possible to imagine some clear-cut aspects to look for, such as the frequency with which regions interact with the EU and the size of the resources at stake for the regions, data rarely exist on a regional level (see Marks et al. 1996:174 for similar data issues). Regional data for political ability, influence on domestic EU policy and socialization are quite simply non-existent.

This means that, in order to test the effect of the alternative explanations on regional participation, data must be gathered first-hand. This brings another set of challenges.

Essentially, there are two ways of gathering regional data on the phenomena discussed above: through interviews or by using surveys. Both methods can without doubt be used in an efficient manner as a means to get information (Marks et al. 1996; Nielsen and Salk 1998; Marks et al. 2002; Tatham 2010). Using interviews opens for receiving large amounts of high quality information directly from those concerned (regional authorities, domestic politicians, EU officials), information that in turn can be systematized and used in comparative quantitative analysis. However, conducting interviews is a costly affair, and particularly so if to be used to gather data for all regions across the EU. Moreover, data based on verbal accounts generally have low reliability (Pennings et al. 2006:58). A respondent's answers can be flawed for a number of reasons. Typically, respondents may wish to appear in a certain way and therefore give answers in line with that wish (Bertrand and Mullainathan 2001:68). Also, the interviewer may influence the answers given, resulting in unreliable information (Grønmo 2004:160). Elite interviews, which interviews conducted in this context would be, tend to suffer particularly much from self-presentation problems, as respondents often have specific agendas and policy views to promote (Pennings et al. 2006:59).

As for surveys, this is a less costly method of gathering data than interviews. However, also survey data has a challenge when it comes to reliability. Most surveys depend on filling out questionnaires, and questions can easily be misinterpreted or answered imprecisely. Hence, surveys tend to produce data with low reliability and systematic error (Bound, Brown and Mathiowetz 2001:1). Questions can of course also be answered on background of the same self-presentation issues as discussed above (Bertrand and Mullainathan 2001:67-68). Moreover, the distance between researcher and respondent makes the interpretation of the answers more difficult, and generates more room for misunderstanding what the respondent was trying to communicate. In addition, surveys are notorious for producing much missing data (Grønmo 2004:183), which can create a bias in the data that *are* obtained.

In general, much groundwork and data collection remains before it is possible to test the effect on regional participation of political entrepreneurship in regions, coalition power of regional authority, and socialization of the EU. At the current time, comparative data at the regional level is non-existent, at least when looking at regions from the entire EU27. If such data are gathered, an interesting agenda for future research could be to test the relationships between the three elements

regional political ability, coalition power, socialization; and the dependent variable of participation in EU policy-making.

4.7 Control variables

In addition to the explanatory dimensions that make up the structural model, I control for the potential influence on participation of the relative size of resources, and the effect of regional exposure to the European integration process. Both dimensions have been focused on repeatedly in the regional participation literature as factors that may interfere with the structural explanatory dimensions. I therefore find it useful to control for them in the analysis.

4.7.1 Relative resources

When it comes to resources, Nielsen and Salk (1998:239) argue that their relative size with respect to the total GDP and the national population matters. That regions try to exit the national context is presumably less likely in cases where a region's GDP and population make up a relatively large share of the national GDP and population. In such cases, regions will often pursue their interests more effectively within the system of the nation-state, instead of competing with more actors in a European context, where they always constitute a relatively smaller unit than «back home» (Nielsen and Salk 1998:239). The greater the relative size of a region, the less frequently will it seek to exit the national context in favor of participating in EU policy-making (Tatham 2010:79). Any findings that confirm the above suggestion would help supplement the explanatory model when it comes to understanding the role of resources in a participation perspective.

4.7.2 Exposure to European integration

Tatham (2010:80) suggests that the very nature of political process in the EU has an effect on how regions participate in EU policy-making structures. In what he refers to as the “Brussels village”, Tatham points out that informal rules, codes of practice and collective understandings of how relations between actors are organized have been developed. When first exposed to these norms, they will encourage regions towards more cooperation with the EU level (Tatham 2010:80). Violation of the norms could lead to sanctioning where regions lose credibility, reputation and access to more cooperation (Scharpf 1997 in Tatham 2010:80). This control variable stands in clear contrast to the explanatory dimensions based on domestic structures, as it emphasizes the above-mentioned socializing effects the EU's political processes are expected to have on regions. As

follows, the findings on this variable can give further assessment of how strong the structural explanation of regional participation is. If EU processes turn out to be a strong predictor for participation, it could indicate that more work should be done on complementing the structural perspective with a socialization perspective.

5.0 METHOD AND OPERATIONALIZATIONS

In this chapter the methodological approach of the thesis is clarified. First, the general quantitative approach is discussed briefly, before multiple regression analysis is discussed more specifically. Then the OLS regression model is presented. In this section, the statistical measures used to assess the explanatory dimensions and the explanatory model are introduced as well. Before each of the explanatory variables presented in chapter four are operationalized, some challenges in using only cross-sectional data are confronted. As a final element after having operationalized the variables, the necessary preconditions for multiple regression analysis are tested and discussed.

5.1 A quantitative approach to regional participation

The field of research recognizes the lack of proper empirical work on regional participation (Olsen 2007:242; Bartolini 2006:1). In her work on the mechanisms of Europeanization, Kohler-Koch (2005:17) calls for more comparative empirical research on the effect the EU system has on regions and domestic structures. The way in which regions across the 27 member-states of the Union participate in policy-making, and what it is that causes varying degrees of participation among regions, has not been mapped out empirically. In this thesis, I address this issue.

In order to be able to establish the general causal factors that make participation differ between regions, a suitable methodological approach must be used. The debate of what types of methods are most useful as a means to uncover causality has occupied a central spot in the methodological discussions of political science for several years (Przeworski and Teune 1970; King et al. 1994; McKeown 1999; Skocpol 2003; Pierson 2003; George and Bennett 2004). As demonstrated by the variety of viewpoints in this debate, there are many different methodological paths to uncover causal relationships in the field of political science. What method is chosen for doing causal research should be decided by the needs of the specific research project.

As follows, for the purpose of this thesis, a quantitative approach is the most suitable. Quantitative analysis is an effective way of estimating generalized causal effects across a range of cases (George and Bennett 2004:25; Pennings et al. 2006:133), as it offers a way of uncovering an array of explanatory factors, while at the same time testing how probable it is that these explanations can be used on a general level to explain the phenomenon examined through looking at specific cases (Skog 2004:59). Here, both the research question and the theoretical motivation calls for using

quantitative analysis when studying regional participation. The research question sets out to perform an empirical comparison of as many EU regions as possible, and uncover the factors that explain their participation in policy-making on a large scale. The thesis' theoretical motivation stems from the lack of quantitative theory-testing in the regional participation field. A quantitative approach offers the possibility to test the theories of regional participation on a general level, and to assess whether or not they seem to be able to explain the ways in which regions act in relation to European policy-making. Moreover, the number of cases in this study makes other approaches than a quantitative one unfeasible. With many cases at hand, using quantitative method offers the best prospects of estimating causal effects (Mahoney 2003:354; Pennings et al. 2006:133).

5.2 Multiple regression analysis

Over the last decades, the use of quantitative techniques within the field of political science, and of regression analysis in particular, has increased tremendously (George and Bennett 2004:3). According to Midtbø (2007:11), the popularity of the regression analysis is a result of both its practical and its statistical advantages. It is exactly these advantages that make multiple regression analysis a suitable quantitative approach to meet the challenges in regional participation research.

The central practical advantage of the multiple regression analysis is its simple, yet efficient, basic foundations. Multiple regressions make it possible for researchers to formulate sophisticated models that incorporate and test many explanatory dimensions simultaneously. At the same time, regression models produce results that are highly understandable and interpretable (Midtbø 2007:11). In other words, multiple regression analysis offers sophistication and simplicity at the same time. In a field where there has been done a lot of work on the possible reasons to why regions participate to different degrees in EU policy-making, a quantitative model must be advanced enough to include all relevant explanatory dimensions. At the same time, in a field where there has been done little comparative empirical work on participation across many regions, a quantitative model should produce results that are efficient and clear. Since such research to little degree has been conducted before, results preferably should be easy to understand and interpret according to the theoretical perspective of what it is that drives participation. Hence, a multiple regression design is exactly what a quantitative study on the whole range of regional participation channels needs, as it offers the possibility to design an explanatory model that is sufficiently advanced theoretically, yet satisfyingly comprehensible empirically.

Furthermore, multiple regression has several statistical features that are beneficial for the scopes of this particular study. First of all, regression analysis is the most effective and appropriate approach of analysis whenever variables are metric, as it utilizes the information in metric data to a full extent (Pennings et al. 2006:152; Skog 2004:59 and 215). Regression analysis should then be a well-adapt technique to study the variables in this thesis. Secondly, it provides the essential analytical tools that are needed in this thesis: a possibility to estimate in an efficient way which structural factors matter for regions to participate (their effect on participation), and also the degree to which they matter (the relative effects on participation with respect to the other factors). Moreover, it offers a means to estimate how much the entire explanatory model as such is capable of explaining (Skog 2004:214). All of these elements are very important in order to test the structural explanatory model discussed in the previous chapter. Being able to estimate the strength of the different explanatory dimensions is of course important in order to uncover which factors lead to regional participation and to see how strong the effects of these factors are. As for the possibility to perform full-model testing, this allows to determine whether or not domestic structures as such are fit to explain why regions participate differently in EU policy-making.

In sum, multiple regression analysis contains all the important factors needed for an efficient quantitative approach to studying regional participation. It offers statistical tools that can be used effectively to test single explanations and the whole explanatory model at the same time, while also being theoretically and practically easy to conduct, interpret and understand. In the next part, the multiple OLS regression model is presented, and the statistical attributes that make multiple regression analysis a suitable quantitative approach for this study are discussed in more detail.

5.3 The multiple OLS regression model – what are we analyzing?

Regression analysis is basically a mathematical way of estimating what causes a certain outcome in a phenomenon that has several possible outcomes. The multiple OLS regression model utilizes linear functions to explain the variation in a dependent variable (Y) as a result of the variation in independent variables (X_k). In its simplest form, the outcome value on the dependent variable Y for any given unit i is understood as a combination of i 's value on all the independent variables and the unexplained variance (ε). Written as an equation, this gives the following regression model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_k X_k + \varepsilon$$

The function contains four different components, which together describe the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. As mentioned above, Y represents the dependent variable and thereby the variation that the model seeks to explain. β_0 is a model constant: it indicates the mean value of Y for all the units in the study that have the value zero on all of the independent variables. The remaining terms in the function, apart from the ε , describe the effect the different independent variables (X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k) have on the dependent variable. These are referred to as the regression coefficients. The coefficient β_1 indicates how much the value of the dependent variable Y changes when the value of the variable X_1 increases by one unit, when the other independent variables are held constant (Skog 2004:261). By analyzing how the dependent variable changes when the independent variables change, the regression model shows to what degree variations in the explanations coincide with consistent variations in the phenomenon we wish to explain.

The last term in the equation, ε , is commonly referred to as the residual of the regression, and is a measure of all the variation in the dependent variable the independent variables are *not* able to account for (Pennings et al. 2006:153). More specifically, ε indicates the degree to which the observed value for a unit i deviates from the value one would expect it to have; due to causal factors the researcher has not been able to specify (Skog 2004:262). Obviously, when building a model that seeks to explain the different outcomes of a phenomenon, one wants this residual to be as small as possible. A good explanatory model should leave as little as possible unexplained. Therefore, in order to reduce the residual to a minimum, the multiple regression model utilized here uses a method of estimation called *ordinary least squares* (OLS). This is a relatively technical procedure, but the basis of it is simple: for all independent variables, OLS regression finds the values that minimize the difference between the values that are observed and the values one would expect to observe. When this is done, one ends up with the model that fits the data in the best way possible, and a multiple regression analysis that explains as much as it possibly can of the variation in the dependent variable.

As discussed earlier on, one of the strengths in regression analysis is that it offers a measure of precisely how *much* of this variation the explanatory model accounts for. By dividing the unexplained variation predicted by the OLS procedure with the total variation on the dependent variable, the analysis shows the actual share of the variation on the dependent variable that is explained by the respective explanatory model (Skog 2004:265). In multiple regression, the most reliable variant of this measure is referred to as *adjusted R²*, as it unlike the simple R^2 measure used in bivariate regressions adjusts for the number of independent variables used and therefore does not

indicate that more of the variation in the dependent variable is explained when new independent variables are introduced, no matter how limited their explanatory strength are (Midtbø 2007:104; Pennings et al. 2006:109). By only awarding variables which explain the phenomenon of study well, adjusted R^2 both provides a measure of explanatory power and encourages parsimony. The value of the adjusted R^2 runs in a numeric interval from zero to one, where zero indicates that the model explains none of the variation, while one indicates that the model explains all of the variation in the dependent variable (Midtbø 2007:88). This gives us a tool to interpret the strength of the explanatory model that is both easy to understand and efficient in use: a low adjusted R^2 score indicates a poor model, and a high score indicates a strong model that is capable of explaining much of why regions participate in policy-making.

In order to assess the strength of the different explanatory variables, we must look at the regression coefficients of the different independent variables, *the unstandardized coefficients* (Pennings et al. 2006:109; Midtbø 2007:73). The interpretation of these coefficients follows the general interpretation discussed above. The coefficients tell us how much the value of the dependent variable changes when the independent variable increases by one unit. For instance, how much does regional participation increase or decrease if political autonomy increases by one unit? This very straight-forward statistical tool gives us the opportunity to see how strong the *effect* of different explanations of participation is. By interpreting every coefficient according to the measuring scales of the dependent and independent variable respectively, the predictive power of the different explanatory dimensions can be assessed.

Furthermore, the regression analysis offers a way of determining which of the explanatory dimensions that matter the most within the model itself, by standardizing the independent variables to one common measuring scale (Midtbø 2007:101). These *standardized coefficients* indicate the *relative effect* an independent variable has on the dependent variable, in comparison with the effect of other independent variables. This is very useful in this study, because it allows us to assess the effect of each explanatory variable with respect to the effect of the other variables included in the explanatory model. Could it be that any of the three dimensions has higher predictive power than the others? By assessing the standardized coefficients, it can be determined which factors cause the largest proportions of the variation in regional participation, and also how large the differences in explanatory strength are between the different factors.

Ultimately, the probability that the relationships found between dependent and independent variables are valid also outside the specific sample used may be tested. This is referred to as

statistical significance testing. More concretely, we test the probability of relationships being erroneous: what are the chances that we reject the null hypothesis of no relationship between the variables, even though there actually is a causal connection between the phenomena we are looking at? (Pennings et al. 2006:123). P-values of each relationship will be utilized to assess statistical significance. These values, which depend on the standard error of the regression coefficient, are easy to interpret. Varying between 0 and 1, they represent the probability of the null hypothesis being falsely rejected. When the value approaches 0, the probability of such error decreases (Midtbø 2007:66). Critical value (or significance levels) are set before initiating the analysis. Depending on the size of the sample, the most used significance level is 1, 5 or 10 percent. In large samples, where significant results are more easily obtained, a strict 1 percent level is often chosen. The sample in this research project, 233 EU regions, is neither particularly small nor particularly large. It therefore seems reasonable to set the significance level at a mid-range 5 percent level, accepting a probability of falsely rejecting the null hypothesis five percent of the time (Midtbø 2007:65).

As shown in this part, a multiple OLS regression offers a set of effective statistical tools that may be used to test the strength of the structural explanatory model for regional participation that this thesis suggests. However, the analysis is subject to some challenges related to data use that need to be discussed. These challenges are discussed in the next section. Furthermore, the simplicity and efficiency of the regression model demands that some statistical assumptions are fulfilled. In order to properly test these assumptions, it is necessary to go through the operationalizations and data of each of the explanatory variables used in the analysis. After the discussion of cross-sectional data use, variable operationalizations are done. The testing of the regression assumptions then concludes this chapter.

5.4 Challenges in multiple regression: using cross-sectional data

In this thesis, I wish to look at regional participation across the entire EU27. As the last eastern enlargement (Romania and Bulgaria) took place as late as in 2007, this limits the study to analyzing cross-sectional data only, and not data that vary across both time and space. According to both Skog (2004) and Finkel (2008), this poses some critical methodological challenges. First, since observations have been made at only one point in time, cross-sectional data contain no measure of change in the dependent nor the independent variables (Finkel 2008:476). This is problematic because it does not really test the effect of changes in independent variables on the dependent variable: it merely *simulates* these effects by comparing high and low values on independent variables and the dependent variable at one point in time (Finkel 2008:476). Second, in cross-

sectional data, it can be hard to establish whether the independent variables occur far away, close in time to, or even after the dependent variable (Skog 2004:74). This can lead to uncertainty around whether the independent variable actually is a direct cause for the dependent variable. The causal direction might just as well be opposite, or the phenomena may be causing each other (Finkel 2008:476).

From a methodological perspective, the first critique of cross-sectional data does not seem that unreasonable. To a certain extent, multiple regression on cross-sectional data does only simulate variation over time with synchronic data. In this thesis, however, the choice of units of analysis is driven theoretically by the wish to include regions from the entire European Union. As pointed out before, this rules out the use of diachronic data and investigation of units that vary both in time and space. I believe that the empirical and theoretical gains that follow from including all EU regions are larger than the methodological gains from including a temporal dimension to the selection of units. After all, simulation of change considered, cross-sectional multiple regressions in general tend to produce robust and efficient results (Pennings et al. 2006:157). Furthermore, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to try to cover the time dimension in addition to developing a new quantitative measure of participation. However, further elaboration of the variable that also includes measuring regional participation in policy-making over time could perhaps be something for future researchers to do.

The latter critique of cross-sectional data is easier to escape. It should be a feasible task for researchers to operationalize variables in such a way that a clear causal relationship between independent and dependent variables is secured, by making sure that independent variables precede the dependent variable in time. Although this might be *easier* to account for with time-series data, it is by no means impossible using cross-sectional data. It does however increase the demands for theoretical justification for the direction of causality. The theoretical argument for my model is extensively presented in the preceding chapter. Moreover, there is no reason to expect that the causal relationship between the variables in this analysis is the other way around. For instance, it seems unlikely that the degree of participation in EU policy-making leads to more autonomy in European regions.

Ultimately, cross-sectional regression designs are criticized for lacking ways of uncovering spurious relationships (Skog 2004:74; Finkel 2008:476). This stems from the researcher neglecting factors that from a theoretical perspective should be included in an explanatory model (Skog 2004:74). According to Finkel (2008:476), using panel data instead of cross-sectional data may solve such

issues, by testing the data for “unobserved heterogeneity”. He admits, however, that also when using panel data, researchers always run the risk of omitting variables that perhaps should have been included in the explanatory model. Skog also recognizes that time-series and panel designs might have just as large problems as cross-sectional designs when it comes to spurious relationships (Skog 2004:76). As a matter of fact, the issue of not covering all possible explanations is a challenge that all social scientists meet, regardless of methods used. After all, social and political phenomena are complex constructions, and covering all sides of them is in many cases nearly an impossible mission. The critique of cross-sectional multiple regression designs having problems of including all important explanatory dimensions therefore seems somewhat unjustified. The challenge of omitting variables and arriving at spurious results is an issue in all social scientific research methods, quantitative as well as qualitative. But, through thorough theoretical discussion of the possible explanations one can minimize the risk of including non-related variables, and through openness on the test methods it becomes possible for other researchers to re-test findings and thereby weed out spurious findings.

5.5 Operationalizations and data

In this part, I present and discuss the operationalizations and data used for each of the independent variables that together constitute the explanatory model presented in the previous chapter. The data for all variables precede the data on the dependent variable in time by one year or more, depending somewhat on data availability. This data selection helps to establish clear cause and effect relationships between independent and dependent variables, and hence to partly escape the critique of muddled causality presented by Skog (2004) and Finkel (2008). The measures of all the independent variables are from 2009 and earlier.

5.5.1 Resources: finances and population

The operationalizations of the two variables finances and population are very straight-forward and traditional measures. Regional financial resources are measured in gross regional product, divided by number of citizens in the respective regions, in thousands of Euros (GRP(pc)). The data are Eurostat data from 2007. Regional population is measured in million inhabitants. These data are also from 2007, and have been drawn from Eurostat¹³.

13 http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/region_cities/regional_statistics/data/database

5.5.2 Political autonomy

Political autonomy has been operationalized and interpreted in a variety of ways in previous research on regional participation (Marks et al. 1996; Hooghe and Marks 1996; Nielsen and Salk 1998; Bomberg and Peterson 1998; Moore 2008; Tatham 2010). Many of these measures have important limitations when it comes to understanding regional political autonomy. Usually, measures of autonomy focus on the federal/non-federal dimension. They give information on the extent to which political authority is monopolized by the central state, but say little about how government below the state level is structured (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008a:112). This results in measures that do not capture variation among federal systems or among non-federal systems. Using these measures, autonomy becomes one-dimensional: either a system is federal, or it is not (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008a:112).

To avoid these limitations, political autonomy is operationalized in this thesis with the recently developed Regional Autonomy Index (RAI) by Marks, Hooghe and Schakel (2008b). The RAI measures both the autonomy regions have from national government, and the role they play as a part of their national political system, incorporating eight different dimensions measured on a scale ranging from zero to 24. The eight dimensions relate to both the degree of self-rule regions have, and to how much they contribute in “shared” rule with their respective national governments. By measuring how regions differ in institutional and legislative autonomy, policy competencies, and fiscal autonomy, the RAI quantifies the strength of a region’s self-rule. When it comes to shared rule, the index measures the power regions have in co-operation with their central governments, by looking at whether regions can provide input on law-making, have routine consultations with central government, have an impact on national redistribution of tax revenue, and play a role in eventual processes of constitutional change (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008b:260-261). In this way, by actually looking at the political power and influence regions have within their member-states instead of simply looking at whether the region is part of a federal system or not, the measure gives a far more nuanced understanding of the concept of regional autonomy. The data used are from 2006, with minimum and maximum scores of 0 (indicating low political autonomy) and 21 (indicating high political autonomy) (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008b:267-274).

5.5.3 Regional identity

On the identity dimension, this model looks at cultural as well as political identity across European regions, as two separate variables. Cultural identity is difficult to measure: it is not an easy task to point out all elements that make specific cultures different from others, and particularly not from

region to region within the same state. But, instead of trying to find a satisfying set of indicators that measure all relevant cultural differences among regions, it is possible to measure how strong the ties between region and citizens are by looking at the citizens' own attachment to their region. In turn, this can be used as an indicator of regional cultural distinctiveness. In regions that are culturally very distinct, it is likely that citizens have a stronger attachment to the region than to the state (Bartolini 2004:24). To use regional attachment as an indicator of cultural distinctiveness has been done in much previous research. Both Marks et al. (1996) and Nielsen and Salk (1998) use Eurobarometer data on citizen identification with the region to operationalize cultural distinctiveness. When operationalizing cultural distinctiveness, I follow their procedure, by looking at the ratio between attachment to the region and attachment to the state (Marks et al. 1996:177; Nielsen and Salk 1998:243), using data from Eurobarometer 71 (European Commission Public Opinion, 2009¹⁴). The minimum value of this variable is a ratio of 0.87, while the maximum value is 1.12. All ratios that fall below 1 suggest that attachment to the state is stronger than the attachment to the region, whereas ratios above 1 indicate the opposite.

Unfortunately, using this operationalization leaves out information that possibly would be of interest. Eurobarometer data, which are gathered on an individual level, are aggregated to a national level only, and the results are not broken down to the regional level. This means that when calculating the ratios between regional and national attachment, variation within each member-state is constant. There exists no way of separating the regional attachment of for instance Bavaria from the regional attachment in Saarland. Because both regions are from the same state, they get the same value of regional attachment when Eurobarometer data are used. It seems highly probable that there exists variation in regional attachment also among regions within the same member-states. Although not discussed, this problem is found in Marks et al. (1996) and Nielsen and Salk (1998) as well, and weakens the measure to some degree. Due to the lack of good alternative data of regional attachment on a regional level, however, the variable is included in the analysis despite containing less information than one would wish for. Even though it does not separate between regions within the same national boundaries, it does show the main patterns of variation that exist in regional attachment from member-state to member-state. The findings are therefore interpreted according to this diversity among regions from different member-states.

Measuring political identity seems to be less problematic than measuring regional attachment. The variable is operationalized as a dummy, according to whether or not the party in government at the regional level is in opposition to the government at the national level. This measure is the one used

14 http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb71/eb713_annexes.pdf

by Tatham (2010:82) and Marks et al. (1996:177). It offers a simple and effective way of measuring political divergence between regions and states. Being a dummy variable, the value 0 indicates that there is convergence between governing parties regionally and nationally, and 1 indicates that different parties control regional governments and national governments. The data used are all from the latest electoral periods prior to 2009. National election data are taken from the Parties and Elections in Europe Database¹⁵. All data in this database are collected from central election commissions, parliaments, departments of statistics, and databases of research institutes in the 27 member-states of the EU. For regional election data, the same database has been used. In addition, the CEVIPOL Election Database¹⁶ has been utilized, and also the Election Resources Database¹⁷. Both databases present data collected from official elections commissions, statistic departments, national parliaments and research institutes.

5.5.4 Control variables

5.5.4.1 Relative resources

The operationalization of relative resources is a straight-forward calculation of how large percentages the gross regional product and the regional population make up of the gross domestic product and the national population. The Eurostat data used to operationalize GRP(pc) and population have been supplied by Eurostat data for the same measures for the same year at the national level¹⁸.

5.5.4.2 Exposure to EU processes

The exposure to EU processes variable is operationalized by the length of direct exposure in years that each region has had to the European Union, according to how long each state has been a member of the Union. The cut-off point for this variable has been set at the end of 2007. This gives a variable that varies from one year of exposure (Bulgaria and Romania) to 55 years of exposure (the founding six member-states). The data on EU membership admission dates for the different member-states have been drawn from the official EU historic section¹⁹.

¹⁵ <http://www.parties-and-elections.de/countries.html>

¹⁶ <http://dev.ulb.ac.be/cevipol/en/elections.html>

¹⁷ <http://electionresources.org/>

¹⁸ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/national_accounts/data/database

¹⁹ http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/index_en.htm

5.6 Multiple regression preconditions

The multiple OLS regression model demands that a set of preconditions are fulfilled. For the model to produce effective and unbiased results, relationships between variables must be linear, and the variables should not be too highly correlated. In addition, the regression residuals must be homoscedastic and normally distributed. Ultimately, the analysis must not be disproportionately affected by outliers (Pennings et al. 2006:157). In this part, I assess how well these preconditions are fulfilled.

5.6.1 *Linearity*

In OLS regression, the most basic assumption is that relationships between dependent and explanatory variables are linear. If relationships are not linear, the mathematical model used as the basis for the analysis may produce regression coefficients that are misleading and even meaningless (Pennings et al. 2006:157). The easiest way of testing whether relationships are linear, is to plot the values of each independent variable against the values of the dependent variable (Skog 2004:239).

Due to the dependent variable in this regression being imperfect metric, it is not always easy to assess how clear the linearity is (since the values on the dependent variable are pre-defined to seven values and not on a continuous numeric scale). When plotting the values of the variables in this regression, however, there are no clear indications of non-linear relationships. And more importantly, none of the relationships seem to be parabolic or exponential. As long as deviations from perfect linear relationships are related to the *degree* of linearity and not the *type* of relationship, regression models in general are not affected negatively in any substantial degree (Skog 2004:246).

5.6.2 *Multicollinearity*

If correlation between two or more of the explanatory variables in an analysis is very high, it might be subject to multicollinearity. This can cause problems for the stability and efficiency of the regression coefficients (Pennings et al. 2006:163). When variables in a regression are highly correlated, their effect on the dependent variable can be hard to separate from one another. This, in turn, leads to regression coefficients that have high standard errors (Skog 2004:287-88). When the standard errors are high, coefficients are less trustworthy (Midtbø 2007:114). Whether or not multicollinearity is a problem, can be tested in two ways: by using correlation analysis, or by measuring the tolerance level of the explanatory variables.

In a correlation analysis, the highest measured R value found is 0,604 between the variables *GRP(pc)* and *years of EU exposure*. Although quite high, the value is still below the critical R value set by Skog (2004:288) at 0.7. When testing the tolerance level of all explanatory variables, all tolerance values are substantially higher than a critical value of 0.25 (Pennings et al. 2006:163). There are, in other words, no problems related to multicollinearity in this analysis.

5.6.3 Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity refers to the spread of the residuals around the regression line. For the regression to be efficient, the variance in the residuals should be constant, and independent of the explanatory variables (Pennings et al. 2006:161). When residuals are not constant, but instead vary according to the values on the independent variables, the regression is subject to problems of *heteroscedasticity*. This affects the precision of the regression coefficients, and thereby weakens the analysis (Skog 2004:247). Although no accepted formal test for homoscedasticity exists, there are ways to assess whether or not the analysis is subject to heteroscedasticity problems (Pennings et al. 2006:161). By looking at the standardized residuals and the standardized predicted values of the regression in a scatter plot, one can visually inspect eventual trends of heteroscedasticity. When running such a visual test on the full regression model in this analysis, no such trends seem to exist. Therefore, imprecise coefficients as a result of non-homoscedastic residuals are not expected.

5.6.4 Normal distribution of residuals

An important element in regression analysis is to test whether or not the regression coefficients are statistically significant. In order to be able to do this, the residuals in the analysis must be normally distributed. When they are not, their distribution will diverge from the t-distribution used in regression analysis to estimate the significance values (Skog 2004:249). As follows, the significance testing becomes highly uncertain and imprecise. The distribution of the residuals can be assessed easily in SPSS by plotting them in a histogram (Skog 2004:250).

Doing this for this specific analysis, the residuals appear as largely normally distributed. Running a normal probability plot of expected and predicted values confirms this finding. There should therefore be no problems of imprecise significance testing in this analysis due to normal distribution problems.

5.6.5 Outliers

Outliers are single cases that affect the regression disproportionately much (Pennings et al. 2006:158). In the presence of such outlying cases, the regression coefficients may not be telling the true story of the majority of all cases, but rather a story biased towards the values of the outliers (Skog 2004:249). Needless to say, as we wish to explain the main trends in participation among all regions, this is most unwanted in the analysis.

The influence of outliers on the regression can be measured in three ways: by DfBeta values, DfFit values and values of standardized residuals. For the DfBeta and DfFit measures, no outliers can be found that violate the critical boundaries of $-2/2$. However, for standardized residuals, eleven outliers are found²⁰. One suggested solution to outlier problems is to run the regression without including the outlying cases, to see if the regression coefficients we have achieved depend on the outlying cases (Pennings et al. 2006:160). The results when this is done do not differ substantially in any way from the original regression: coefficients have the same direction and significance values do not change in notable degree. Moreover, there does not seem to be any clear trends in data or theory that justifies excluding the outliers from the analysis. When such trends cannot be detected, cases should as a general rule not be excluded (Skog 2004:249, Pennings et al. 2006:160). Ultimately, the eleven cases are not excluded from the regression.

20 Utrecht (NL), Ceuta (ESP), Melilla (ESP), Åland (FIN), Catalonia (ESP), Auvergne (FRA), Bretagne (FRA), Nord – Pais-de-Calais (FRA), Itä-Suomi (FIN), Siauliai (LIT) and Panevezio (LIT).

6.0 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter the results from the regression analysis are presented and discussed. Initially, the descriptive statistics of the explanatory variables are discussed one by one. Next, eight different regression models are tested and presented, before the findings from these analyses are discussed with regard to the theoretical perspective. After this, the explanatory strength of the structural model is assessed, and the strength of the Europeanization perspective in explaining regional participation is discussed. In the last part, the main finding from the regression is examined more closely, using simple cross table analysis.

6.1 Descriptive statistics

In this part, I give a brief account of the descriptive statistics of the explanatory variables in the analysis. Table 3 presents the central descriptives of each variable: number of observations (N), minimum, maximum and mean values, and standard deviation.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for explanatory variables.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Total GRP(pc) in region (in thousands)	231	2.70	60.30	21.5602	11.61614
Total population in region (in millions)	233	.03	18.03	2.1301	2.34851
Regional Political Autonomy Index	233	.0	21.0	9.114	6.436
Political divergence from national government	214	0	1	.330	.470
Regional attachment	233	.87	1.12	.9694	.0485
Regional gross product as percentage of GDP	233	.14	100.00	11.588	15.825
Regional population as percentage of national population	233	.16	100.00	11.6085	14.5489
Years of exposure to EU processes	233	1	55	26.55	21.29

In general, data availability for the EU and European regions on the variables used in this analysis is very high. This results in few missing values for the independent variables. For the five explanatory variables and the three control variables in the explanatory model, values are missing only for the *GRP(pc)* variable and the *political divergence* variable. For the *GRP(pc)* measure, the valid N is 231, with missing values for Luxembourg and Malta; countries where no proper regional subdivisions exist and gross regional product cannot be calculated in a meaningful way. As for the political divergence variable, the valid N is 214. This gives a total of 19 missing values, just above eight percent of the total N of 233. Too many missing values on the independent variables may lead to imprecise and biased regression coefficients (Skog 2004:77). However, analysis of the effect of missing values on regression coefficients show that as long as the missing value percentage does not exceed ten percent of total N, coefficients can still be considered to give a precise estimate of the relationship between variables (Myrtveit et al. 2001:1003-1006). As the proportion of missing values for the political divergence variable does not exceed this limit, it is unlikely that regression results will be imprecise due to loss of units.

The *GRP(pc)* variable varies between 2700 Euro for the North-West region of Bulgaria, and 60 300 Euro for the Belgian Brussels-Capital region. The mean value is 21 560, while there is a standard deviation of 11 600. This suggests that there might be some outlying cases for this variable, as there are units that are placed more than two standard deviations away from the central tendency. A visual inspection of the data distribution confirms that there are some outliers, in particular at the lower end of the scale. However, a kurtosis test of this distribution indicates that these outlying values do not affect the normal distribution of the variable in any substantial way. This is further confirmed by a skewness value close to zero, suggesting that the variable is satisfyingly normally distributed.

For the *population* variable, the minimum value is 30 000 for Åland, while the maximum value is 18 030 000 for North Rhine-Westphalia. The mean is 2 130 100, and the standard deviation 2 348 510. The variable is fairly normally distributed, but with a quite strong tail towards the low values. Most of the units are concentrated at this low end of the spectrum, as indicated by the mean value and the standard deviation as well as by the kurtosis test. There are some outliers for very high population values, but these constitute a marginal proportion of all units.

The *Regional Autonomy Index* has a minimum value of zero for 16 regions, whereas the maximum value is 21 for all the German Länder. Although this variable is not perfectly normally distributed, most cases follow the variable's main trends. Typically, cases are placed in the range from 2.5 to

15.5; within one standard deviation away from the mean in either direction. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of all units are found within this interval.

Political divergence is a dummy variable, where scores are either zero or one. Both values are represented in the data. The mean value of 0.33 indicates that 33 percent of the units have the value 1, which indicates that in 33 percent of the cases, regional government diverges from national government when it comes to party composition. Given the fact that the variable is a dummy, the standard deviation of 0.47 covers the scores of all other cases on this variable.

The variable *regional attachment* varies from 0.87 in Dutch regions to 1.12 in all Latvian regions, indicating more attachment to the nation over the region in the first case and vice versa for the latter. The mean value of 0.9694 suggests that the typical unit is somewhat disposed towards stronger attachment to the nation than to the region. As the standard deviation shows, the dispersion around this value is small (0.0485). The variable is skewed a little towards values just below 1.0, but the skewness test indicates that this does not pose any substantial challenges to the normal distribution of the variable.

When it comes to the control variables, *relative GRP(pc)* ranges from 0.14 for Melilla (ESP) to 100 percent of gross domestic product for Cyprus, with a mean value of 11.5880 and a standard deviation of 15.825. The variable has a tail to the left in its distribution, but it still remains relatively well normally distributed. *Relative population* has a minimum value of 0.16 percent for Melilla (ESP) and Ceuta (ESP), a maximum value of 100 percent for Cyprus, and a mean value of 11.6085. The standard deviation is 14.5489. Like the relative GRP(pc) variable, relative population as well is skewed towards the lower values of the scale. The *years of exposure to EU processes* variable has a minimum value of 1 for all Bulgarian and Romanian regions, and 55 for all regions from the original six member-states (with exceptions for the eastern German regions which did not enter the Union until 1990). The average time of exposure is 26.55 years, and the standard deviation 21.292. The values of central tendency and dispersion illustrate the uneven exposure to EU processes regions have experienced contingent on when their respective member-state entered the Union.

6.2 Main regression results

The table below shows the effect of the three dimensions resources, autonomy and identity on the dependent variable participation. The analysis has been run according to the exploratory nature of the model of explanation described in chapter four. In order to explore the effects of the different

explanatory dimensions individually and in combination, I run eight different regression models consisting of different combinations of variables. The first three models test each of the three explanatory dimensions individually, looking at the effects of resources, autonomy and identity on regional participation one dimension at the time. The models four, five, and six test the effects of all possible paired combinations of the three dimensions: resources and autonomy, resources and identity, and autonomy and resources. Model 7 includes all three dimensions, and constitutes thereby a test of the full explanatory model as described in chapter four. Model 8 also includes the three control variables in addition to the variables that make up the structural model.

By exploring different combinations of variables in this way, it is possible to look at how the three dimensions affect participation one by one, and also at what happens to the singular effects of the dimensions when other influences are controlled for. Furthermore, it opens for making assessments about which combination of factors accounts for the highest amount of variation in the dependent variable. By doing this, it is possible to get an indication of the strength of the structural perspective in explaining regional participation.

Table 4: Regression models. The effect of resources, autonomy, and identity on the dependent variable: Regional Participation Index.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Model constant	.785	.744	-2.611	.500	-6.856	1.140	-.859	-1.094
Resources								
GRP(pc)	.043/.387 *** (6.365)			.014/.126 ** (2.093)	.046/.406 *** (6.251)		.013/.113 * (1.729)	.009/.081 (1.036)
Population	.094/.171 *** (2.802)			.055/.100 * (1.889)	.096/.180 *** (2.931)		.062/.116 ** (2.178)	.048/.090 (1.595)
Autonomy								
Regional autonomy index		.128/.633 *** (12.429)		.109/.537 *** (8.957)		.132/.660*** (12.137)	.113/.561*** (8.584)	.117/.581 *** (7.465)
Identity								
Political divergence			.584/.211 *** (3.111)		.290/.105 * (1.691)	.114/.041 (.762)	.098/.036 (.658)	.084/.031 (.529)
Regional attachment			4.554/.148 ** (2.177)		7.785/.247*** (4.015)	-.484/-.160 (-.291)	1.349/.043 (.738)	1.427/.045 (.687)
Control variables								
Relative GRP(pc)								-.021/-.225 (-1.169)
Relative population								.033/.307 (1.647)
Exposure to the EU								.004/.070 (.888)

Note: unstandardized coefficients/standardized coefficients. t-values in parenthesis. * $p < 0,10$. ** $p < 0,05$. *** $p < 0,01$.

Model results								
Adjusted R ²	.207	.398	.047	.412	.256	.437	.449	.454
Std. error	1.152	1.006	1.271	.993	1.121	.976	.964	.960
N	231	231	214	231	212	214	212	212

The three initial models all report findings that support the hypotheses of positive influence of resources, autonomy and identity on regional participation. On the resource dimension in the first model, it is found that both GRP(pc) and population have a positive effect on participation. For an increase of 1000 Euro in GRP(pc), participation increases by .043 index points. However, given the fact that the Regional Participation Index (RPI) is not a continuous numeric variable, this change is not possible. The index value for the RPI can only change by one whole point at a time. For the value of the RPI to change by one point, GRP(pc) must increase by roughly 23000 Euro. This indicates that where there is a considerable increase in GRP(pc), there can also be substantial variation in participation. Moreover, it indicates that there might be a financial threshold for more regional participation in the EU. First when the regional gross product exceeds 23000 Euro, participation in EU policy-making is likely to increase.

As for the population variable, there is an increase in participation of .094 index points when population increases by 1 million inhabitants. The standardized coefficients show that within the first model, the relative effect of GRP(pc) is larger than that of population size. Both relationships between resources and participation are statistically significant at a 1-percent level. The same possible threshold effect applies to this finding. For participation to increase one point, population has to increase by around ten million inhabitants. This could suggest that regions with more than ten million inhabitants participate more than regions with populations below this limit. In practice, however, there are very few European regions of that size, and there seems to be no pattern of more participation among these regions than among less populous regions.

The second model confirms a strong positive relationship between autonomy and participation. For an increase of one point on the Regional Autonomy Index there is an increase of .128 points in regional participation. As the total possible variation of the RAI runs from zero to 21, the difference in participation among regions can be substantial as we move up the autonomy scale, increasing by .128 points for every step. The effect is highly significant, at a 1-percent level. Once again, the fact that the RPI may increase only by whole points needs to be considered. For the value of the RPI to increase by 1, political autonomy must increase by almost 8 points. This indicates that regions with scores that exceed the threshold of 8 points on the autonomy index participate more in EU policy-making than do regions below this threshold.

When it comes to the identity dimension, both variables have a positive effect on regional participation in model 3. For political divergence, there is a difference of .584 points on the participation index between regional governments from opposition parties and regional government

that shares partisanship with national government, indicating that regional authorities that are not affiliated with national governments party-wise participate more in EU policy-making structures. As for regional attachment, a one point increase in attachment to the region leads to an increase in participation of 4.554 points. Initially, this effect seems extraordinarily strong, and indicates a very clear relationship between regional attachment and regional participation. However, within the identity model, political divergence is slightly stronger predictor for participation than regional attachment is, as reported by the standardized coefficients. Moreover, although both effects are significant, political divergence is significant at a 1-percent level, whereas regional attachment is significant at the 5-percent level.

When the three dimensions are combined in different multiple models, the effects of the variables change. This is shown in model 4 to 6. Model 4 combines the resource dimension with the autonomy dimension. When this is done, both effects and relative effects of GRP(pc) and population size are reduced. As the coefficients show, the effect of both variables are more or less half of what they are in model 1. The relationships are also less significant than in the first model, but still significant at a 5-percent level for GRP(pc) and at a 10-percent level for population. Furthermore, the values of the standardized coefficients demonstrate that, with respect to the autonomy variable, the relative effects of GRP(pc) and population are less strong in this model. When autonomy is controlled for, the standardized coefficients are approximately halved as well, with values of .126 for GRP(pc) and .100 for population. The relationship between autonomy and participation, however, remains almost just as strong in this model as in the second model. The effect of autonomy on participation is reduced only marginally, and the relative effect remains above 0.5, indicating that the variable is important as a predictor for the dependent variable (Midtbø 2007:102). Moreover, the relationship remains significant at the 1-percent level.

In model 5 the resource dimension is combined with the identity dimension. In combination with the identity variables, the variables GRP(pc) and population have coefficients very similar to those they have in the first model, both unstandardized and standardized. They are also significant at a 1-percent level, like in model 1. The identity variables political divergence and regional attachment have effects and relative effects that differ somewhat from those in model 3. Regional attachment is relatively more important than political divergence in this model, judging by the standardized coefficients. It is also significant at a 1-percent level, whereas political divergence only is significant at a 10-percent level, thus exceeding the 5-percent limit set for this analysis. Political divergence then, loses its effect when resources are controlled for.

Model 6 combines identity and autonomy. This combination alters the results on the identity dimension substantially. When controlling for autonomy, neither political divergence nor regional attachment is statistically significant at a satisfying level. Autonomy, in this model, seems to remove all explanatory power from the two identity measures. The effect of autonomy itself, however, is stable. As demonstrated in table 4, the regression coefficient is nearly identical to the coefficient in the autonomy model: for one unit's increase on the autonomy index, regional participation increases by .132 points. The relative effect is also very similar, with only a slight increase in value for the standardized coefficient. The relationship is significant at the 1-percent level, like it is in both model 2 and 4.

The autonomy variable continues to be stable in model 7, where the effects of all the three dimensions on participation are tested simultaneously. The value of the unstandardized coefficient is close to the values in previous models (.113) and the standardized coefficient is equally high (.660). Again, the effect of autonomy is significant at a 1-percent level. The results for the variables on both the resource and the identity dimension turn out to be similar to the results in previous models where they are combined with autonomy. Here, the variables GRP(pc) and population are less significant than in the first model. Both the effects and the relative effects are similar to those in model 4, where they are controlled for the effect of autonomy. Like in model 4, they are substantially weaker than initially shown. As for the identity variables political divergence and regional attachment, they follow the pattern of model 6: neither of the relationships between the variables and regional participation is statistically significant when autonomy is controlled for. It turns out then, that the altered effects found in the models combining autonomy and resources, and autonomy and identity with respect to the effects in the three first models, also are found in the model where all of the three dimensions are combined.

In the final model 8, control variables are included in addition to the variables on the three main explanatory dimensions. As table 4 reports, neither of these control variables are statistically significant. However, the inclusion of relative GRP(pc) and relative population measures as controls for the resource variables does seem to change the results for these variables. When the size of gross regional product and population relative to the size of gross domestic product and total national population is controlled for, the positive effect of resources on participation is no longer significant. In fact, neither the GRP(pc) nor the population variable is statistically significant at a satisfying level in this model. As for political divergence and regional attachment, these variables are not significant in this model either. The only significant finding in the final model is that autonomy has

a strong positive effect on regional participation. The values of both the unstandardized and standardized coefficients are at the same stable level as in all previous models.

When exploring how the three explanatory dimensions in this analysis work together in different combinations, a clear pattern emerges. Across the eight models discussed above, all variables but autonomy lose much or all of their effect in models where other variables are controlled for. In model 4, the resource variables are weakened by strong effect of autonomy. In model 6, the identity variables are no longer significant when the autonomy measure is introduced. The same thing happens in model 7, when all dimensions are tested at the same time. In the final model, the only significant finding is that autonomy has a strong positive effect on regional participation. More regional autonomy leads to more participation in EU policy-making from regions within the Union. In the next part, these findings are discussed further.

6.3 Discussing the main findings: how do the explanatory dimensions hold up?

The findings confirm the strong relationship already suggested in previous research between high regional autonomy and a high degree of regional participation in the EU (Marks et al. 1996; Nielsen and Salk 1998; Marks et al. 2002). The analysis shows that the positive effect of autonomy on participation is strong, considering the range of possible changes along the measurement scale of the Regional Autonomy Index used to operationalize the variable. As shown above, the effect is significant across all models at a stable 1-percent level.

Based on the results, political autonomy clearly is the strongest predictor of regional state bypassing in the EU. Across all eight models, autonomy is the dominant explanatory factor of participation in the six influence channels that constitute the EU policy-making structures. This finding strengthens the previously confirmed relationship between autonomy and participation by establishing clear causal inference between the two in a broader sample than before, using a broader conceptual approach to participation. Whereas previous research has looked at how autonomy influences participation in samples that now are outdated (Marks et al. 1996; Nielsen and Salk 1998) or in relatively small samples (Tatham 2010), this analysis finds a significant relationship between the two phenomena in a sample consisting of regions from all EU countries. Moreover, the finding shows that political autonomy seems to be the main determinant for participation also when participation is measured through all possible channels regions may use to access the EU, and not

the determining factor for participation measured more narrowly as direct representation offices in Brussels. In all, the autonomy hypothesis finds solid empirical justification in this analysis.

The consistently strong findings in this analysis also give additional strength to the theoretical connection between autonomy and participation. The Regional Autonomy Index used to measure political autonomy is, as demonstrated earlier, a more comprehensive measure when it comes to incorporating political responsibilities and competencies of regional authorities than many previous measures (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008a:112). Whereas most measures simply measure whether or not a country has some sort of federal structure, the RAI specifically considers the *range* of policies for which regional government is responsible (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008b:260). Regions that have policy responsibilities within economic, cultural, educational, and welfare policy are considered to be more autonomous than regions which do not have such responsibilities, and therefore score higher on the index (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008b:260). These policy areas correspond with areas where political competencies to a large degree have been moved from the national level to the EU level (Claes and Førlund 2004:115-116). As follows, regions that score high on the RAI are regions that are responsible for policy areas that overlap with EU policy responsibility areas. Such an overlap of regional competencies and EU competencies is in the literature considered to be decisive for regional participation, since regions with policy competencies similar to those the Union have are more likely to want to influence policy because they are more directly affected by the outcome (Marks et al. 1996:170). The close correspondence between the measure used for political autonomy and the theoretical foundations of how autonomy structures affect participation, means that the strongly significant and stable results also give solid defence to the theoretical grounds of the autonomy hypothesis.

Furthermore, using the RAI as measure of autonomy produces results that disprove the findings in Tatham (2010:83). These findings show that autonomy does not lead to more regional state bypassing, but rather to less. Tatham argues that regions that have large degrees of autonomy are more included in the process of shaping domestic EU policy. Hence, highly autonomous regions have less incentive to bypass the state (Tatham 2010:83). However, the RAI measures the degree of regional inclusion in domestic policy-making, by looking at the role regions play in national law-making, policy-making and in constitutional amendment (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008a:115). As demonstrated by the regression coefficient for the autonomy variable, participation increases when a region's value on the RAI increases. This means, in turn, that when inclusion in domestic policy increases, this has positive effect on regional participation (since more inclusion leads to a higher value on the autonomy index). Based on this analysis, domestic inclusion of regional

authority does not seem to reduce state bypassing, like claimed by Tatham (2010). Rather, it looks like regional authorities that enjoy high political autonomy manage to engage in both domestic and supranational channels in order to try to influence EU policy-making directly. This finding is highly interesting as it rejects that regional participation in the EU excludes participation on the domestic level. Tatham's finding indicates that regional participation is a game of either/or: either a region bypasses the state, or it co-operates with the state in their EU affairs (Tatham 2010:83-84). However, I find that as the inclusion of regions in development of national policy increases, so does participation in EU policy-making. Regions that are highly autonomous politically are not constrained to choosing one arena to participate in. Instead, they may use their autonomy to participate in policy-making both domestically *and* in Europe.

Whereas the autonomy dimension finds strong support in the analysis, support for the other two dimensions is far less evident. For the two resource variables, GRP(pc) and population, both the effects and the relative effects vary quite a lot across the different regression models tested. So does the degree of statistical significance for the relationships between these variables and participation. In the full model where control variables for relative resource size are included, neither variable has any significant effect on participation. As for the identity variables political divergence and regional attachment, neither of them has any significant effect on participation as long as autonomy is included in the regression models. In the full model, the effects of the two variables are far from significant. Moreover, the model for identity (model 3) and the model including identity and resources (model 5) show that the effect of identity on participation is unstable even when autonomy is not controlled for.

These results for the resource and identity dimensions are to a large degree incoherent with results from previous research. Nielsen and Salk (1998:245) present statistically significant results for positive effects of GRP on regional mobilization in Brussels. They also find a significant negative relationship between relative resources and mobilization. In both instances, the findings occur in models where autonomy is included. Marks et al. (1996:179) and Tatham (2010:86) both uncover significant relationships between political divergence and mobilization. Both in Marks et al. and in Tatham, autonomy has significant effect on mobilization alongside the effect of political divergence.

There may be several reasons as to why the findings in this analysis differ from previous analyses. A first possible explanation might be found in the operationalizations of the three explanatory dimensions in this analysis with respect to operationalizations from earlier work. For the resource

and the identity dimension, the measures used in previous research are very or completely similar to the measures used in this analysis. However, as discussed in the operationalizations part, the measures used for autonomy in previous research have often been one-dimensional and unable to separate systems from each other within the federal and non-federal categories (Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008a:112). The Regional Autonomy Index used in this thesis is far more able to distinguish political systems from each other also within the federal and non-federal categories. The RAI takes into consideration the fact that autonomy is composed of shared rule with national government as well as self-rule within the region (Elazar 1987; Marks, Hooghe and Schakel 2008), creating a measure that captures more of the variation among regions and states. The use of a more developed measure for autonomy creates in turn a larger “informational” gap between some of the variables in the analysis. Whereas autonomy is measured by the RAI, political divergence is measured as a dummy. This leaves this variable with relatively less information than a numeric variable (Midtbø 2007:37). As follows, this makes the political divergence measure weaker relative to the autonomy measure. This discrepancy between different measures when it comes to covering the variation in the data material may lead to the stronger measures “swallowing” the effect of the weaker ones. A similar process is discussed in Marks et al. (1996:185) as a reason for why the effect of regional identity on mobilization turns out to be non-significant.

A second possible explanation lies in the conceptualization and the measurement of the dependent variable used in this analysis. One of the central aspects of this thesis is that it looks at regional participation through all six channels regions may use as access points to EU policy-making. Previous analyses have primarily looked at regional mobilization in Brussels through the establishment of representation offices. It could be that the use of a wider concept of participation and different measures than those used in previous analyses causes different regression results. The establishment of representation offices in Brussels is a process that is very financial in character: it demands large resources when it comes to hiring office space and staff, and to finance active influence campaigns towards EU actors (Marks et al. 2002:11). The role of regional representation offices are very lobby-like in character, and to make yourself heard in the Brussels jungle of lobbyist can be a particularly resource-demanding task (McAleavey and Mitchell 1994; John and McAteer 1998). Participation in EU policy-making more broadly is far more political in its nature (Keating and Hooghe 2006:283; Tatham 2008:511). Whether a region is represented in for instance the European Parliament, is not decided by finances, but by votes in EP elections. Similarly, participation in a state’s delegation to the Committee of the Regions depends on political bargaining between regions and national government, and not on the bankroll of regional authorities. The fact that resources are an important explanation for the existence of a regional representation office in

Brussels like in the findings of Nielsen and Salk (1998:245), and not in this analysis where the dependent variable is just as much related to political participation as to lobby-like representation, is then perhaps not that surprising.

Thirdly of course, there is the straight-forward explanation that follows from the results. When no satisfactory statistically significant connection between resources, identity and participation is found, this indicates that there are no strong empirical connections between the phenomena, despite the theoretical expectations. The regression analysis dismisses the relationships suggested in the literature. When the three main structural dimensions in the Europeanization perspective are tested as determinants of participation, political autonomy is the one dimension that seems to matter.

This section discusses in depth the main findings of the regression with regards to the effect of the different explanatory variables. In the following section, the explanatory power of the different *models* is analyzed. Whereas the coefficients discussed above show the effect that each of the variables has on the dependent variable, the adjusted R^2 measure reports how much of the variation in regional participation the full explanatory model is able to account for. In the following, I evaluate the different explanatory models and look at the strength of the structural model in explaining regional participation in EU policy-making structures.

6.4 Evaluating the explanatory model: how strong is the Europeanization perspective?

The discussion of the different regression models demonstrates how the effects of the different variables vary when combined in various ways. The same goes for the explanatory power of the entire models: how much of the variation in regional participation in EU policy-making each model is able to account for varies substantially. The adjusted R^2 reported in table 4 offers an easily interpretable measure of how much of this variation the different models explain, ranging from zero to 100 percent.

In the first three regression models the adjusted R^2 varies considerably in size. Model 1, testing the effect of resources on participation, accounts for 20.7 percent of the variation in participation. Model 2, where the influence of autonomy on participation is tested, is able to explain 39.8 percent of the variation in participation. Model 3, in which the effect of identity is tested, only 4.7 percent of the participation is accounted for.

In the next three models (4-6) the three dimensions are paired in all possible combinations. This leads to the following explained variation for the dependent variable: model 4, combining resources and autonomy, explains 41.2 percent of participation; model 5, where resources are paired up with identity, accounts for 25.6 percent of the variation in participation; model 6, combining identity with autonomy, has an explanatory power of 43.7 percent, thus making it the highest percentage predicted this far.

Model 7 combines all three explanatory dimensions in one model. This increases the explanatory power further with an adjusted R^2 value of 44.9 percent. Model 8 also includes relevant control variables, raising the explanatory power to 45.4 percent, which is the highest across all of the eight models.

The pattern that emerges across the eight models when looking at explanatory power is highly convergent with the pattern found in the effects and relative effects of the dimensions autonomy, resources and identity. The models that include autonomy as one of the explanatory variables, have adjusted R^2 values that are at least twenty percent higher than the values for the models where autonomy is left out. This underlines the main finding of the previous section. It seems that political autonomy by far is the most important determinant for regional participation in the policy-making of the EU. Not only does the autonomy variable have the clearest significant effect and the strongest relative effect on participation, but the regression models that include autonomy as one of its components explain almost twice the variation in participation compared to other models run. Quite simply, political autonomy matters for regional participation.

A quick analysis of tolerance strengthens the autonomy finding further. As can be seen in table 4, the adjusted R^2 increases in the large models (7 and 8) even though the effects of the variables added to the regression are not significant. It is somewhat puzzling that the model explains more of regional participation even when including variables that apparently do not have any effect on participation. However, this can be explained by looking at the tolerance values. The tolerance values indicate the percent of variance in a variable that cannot be accounted for by the other variables. Low tolerance values then indicate that the variable should be excluded from the analysis since it is absorbed by the other variables (Pennings et al. 2006:163). The tolerance values for the variables in model 7 and 8 show that none of the variables are redundant, despite not having a significant effect on participation. This helps explaining why the adjusted R^2 increases. The combination of variables adds explanatory strength to the models: all variables do explain some variation in how regions participate in the EU. However, the only explanatory dimension that is

statistically significant at a satisfactory level in this sample is political autonomy. The other variables may have an effect as well, as indicated by the tolerance values and the adjusted R^2 values, but these effects cannot be generalized to explain participation in EU policy-making outside this particular sample of regions. As determining factors of regional participation in a general sense, they are simply not strong enough. Political autonomy is *the* factor that determines whether or not regions manage to access policy-making in the Union.

The exploration of these different combinations of variables gives the analysis eight explanatory models for regional participation to choose from. A good explanatory model should explain as much as possible of the variation in the dependent variable. In this thesis then, a good model must account for as much as possible of the regional participation observed. Among the eight models tested in this analysis, two of them stand out as stronger than the other. Both model 7 and 8 explain more than 40 percent of the variation in participation. According to Midtbø (2007:88-89), in a situation of competing explanatory models, the standard error of the model estimate may be used as a yardstick of which explanatory model to choose. The differences in these standard error values are small in this analysis (.964 for model 7, .960 for model 8), and it might be argued that the difference is of little interest. Nevertheless, I choose the most conservative line for interpreting these values, preferring the model with the lowest standard error (Midtbø 2007:89).

This means that after exploring a series of different explanatory models, model 8 is chosen as the final explanatory model for regional participation in this analysis. But, how well does this model explain the participation observed across the six influence channels available to European regions? And, what does the model say about the Europeanization perspective as a theoretical approach to regional participation in the EU?

As mentioned, the model has an adjusted R^2 value of .454, indicating that the model as such is able to account for close to half of the variation in how European regions participate in EU policy-making. Judgments about what constitutes a satisfyingly high adjusted R^2 are difficult to make, and should be passed with care (Midtbø 2007:89). When assessing R^2 values the specific research project must be taken into consideration, since similar values may be interpreted as both high and low, depending on the theoretical base and the goal of the study (Pennings et al. 2006:108).

The theoretical base of the Europeanization perspective is that structures determine participation. The way economic, political and identity structures vary across Europe determine the degree to which European regions manage to participate in EU policy-making. Like in much of social science

however, it is unlikely that one single theoretical approach may be used to explain all variation in the phenomenon one is investigating. When assessing the structure-based explanatory model, this theoretical base should be taken into consideration. Most likely, structures do not give an exhaustive explanation of regional participation. Still, according to both Bartolini (2006) and Kohler-Koch (2005), structures are a *central* element in determining whether or not regions manage to bypass the nation-state. Hence, the estimates of the explanatory model should show this – and they do. The adjusted R^2 of the explanatory model reports that structures, although not accounting for all the variation in the dependent variable, account for a *large proportion* of the variation. When the theoretical base of the thesis is taken into consideration, the model seems to be well fit to explain variation in regional participation. Domestic structures stand out as critical determinants for the participation observed across the six channels measured by the Regional Participation Index.

Accounting for almost half of the variation in the dependent variable, the Europeanization model has an explanatory power that in a social science perspective can be considered high. The model seems well fit to explain substantial amounts of regional participation in the EU. Still, like many other social phenomena, regional participation is unlikely to be explained by structures alone. In order to explain more of the variation in regional participation through the six major influence channels in EU policy-making, it might be necessary to consider other factors and theoretical approaches as well. However, as discussed in chapter four, more systematic research on alternative approaches is needed before many of them can be tested as thoroughly as the structural approach.

Although the regression analysis clearly establishes that autonomy has a positive effect on participation, it does not say much about how autonomy affects participation through different channels. The estimated increase on the participation index when autonomy increases indicates that a region participates more, but it does not say anything about the effect more political autonomy has on participation through each of the specific channels that make up the index. And, as participation in each channel does not depend on participation in other channels when using the operationalizations in this analysis, an increase in index value does not necessarily indicate an even increase in participation across the six channels. In the next section, I examine more closely the effect of autonomy on each of the six different channels in the participation index.

6.5 Moving in on the central finding – patterns in participation and autonomy

The main finding in this regression analysis is that autonomy is the central determinant of regional participation in EU policy-making. Based on the results, there is reason to believe that regions with

more political responsibility are more disposed towards active participation in the EU than respectively less autonomous regions are. As mentioned in the previous section, the different participation channels have somewhat different characteristics. Whereas participation in some of the channels, like regional representation offices, can be more economical in character, participation in others seems to be first and foremost political. It is therefore not unlikely that autonomy, which is a political explanation of participation, has varying effects on how regions participate across the six different channels constituting the dependent variable in this analysis.

In this part, the connections between autonomy and the six different channels are investigated closer. First, the Regional Participation Index is decomposed, and I look at the central descriptives for each of the participatory channels. Next, I examine the relationships between each of the channels and the central regression finding autonomy. Using simple cross table analysis for bivariate relationships, I look at whether autonomy has varying influence on participation through the six different channels that constitute the Regional Participation Index.

6.5.1 Decomposing the RPI: descriptive analysis

Table 5 shows how participation differs across the six different channels for participation in EU policy-making available to the regions. Since all six channels are operationalized using dummy variables, the mean values report the percentage of regions that participate in each of the channels. The standard deviations for each variable give an indication of the variation around the mean. High standard deviations do generally suggest that the mean values give a poor representation of the data material (Skog 2004:231).

Table 5: Descriptive statistics for the six channels constituting the RPI.

	European Commission	Council of the EU	European Parliament	Committee of the Regions	Regional lobbies	Brussels office
Mean	.20	.08	.03	.40	.53	.67
Std. deviation	.399	.274	.171	.491	.500	.471

As can be seen in the first row, participation is the highest in the direct participation channel. 67 per cent of all regions in the cross-section have a representation office in Brussels. Participation in

policy-making through regional lobbies is at 53 per cent. 40 per cent of all regions participate in the Committee of the Regions, whereas only 20 per cent participate through the European Commission. The lowest percentages are found for participation through the Council of the EU and the European Parliament, with 8 and 3 per cent respectively. The standard deviations for all variables indicate some variation around the mean. However, since these variables are dichotomous variables where the mean shows the percentage of participation through each channel, the variation around the mean simply underlines that there are regions that do not participate.

Based on the central tendencies of the six channels, it seems clear that participation is highest through two particular channels of participation: the regional lobby channel, and the office mobilization channel. Within the four other channels participation is on average lower. The question then is: are there any patterns in how this differing participation relates to political autonomy, the only significant finding in the regression analysis?

6.5.2 Cross table analysis: Are some channels more affected by autonomy structures than others?

Cross table analysis is a useful and effective instrument when it comes to exploring and testing relationships between variables where one variable is expected to have a particular influence on a second variable (Pennings et al. 2006:99; Grønmo 2004:295). By placing the variables in a cross table, the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable can be determined with the help of a few simple statistical measures (Pennings et al. 2006:99). As an initial indicator of the strength of the influence, the frequency distribution for the variables is used to compare the influence of low and high values of autonomy on participation. Large *percentage differences* in the frequency distribution suggest that autonomy has a strong effect on participation (Pennings et al. 2006:100). Next, the relationship between autonomy and participation is controlled for statistical significance, using the *chi-square measure* (Grønmo 2004:328). Finally, I test in which of the six channels the effect of autonomy on participation is the strongest, using *Cramer's v* (Pennings et al. 2006:103).

Before conducting the cross table analysis I have recoded the Regional Autonomy Index into a dichotomous variable, in order to get an analysis consisting of two-by-two tables only²¹. This is done to make this analysis just as parsimonious as the regression analysis without losing efficacy, thereby following the general analytical approach of the thesis. Two-by-two tables are effective and

²¹ The cut-off value for what constitutes low/high political autonomy is the median of the Regional Autonomy Index (8.0 points). This gives a balanced data material, and prevents the analysis from excessive influence from units with extreme index values (Grønmo 2004:282; Pennings et al. 2006:93).

clear analytical instruments that produce highly interpretable results (Grønmo 2004:295). Moreover, the use of only dichotomous variables makes it possible to compare the results across different cross table analyses. When the variables in the analysis only have two values each, *Cramer's v* varies within a fixed interval from zero to 1, where zero indicates a weak relationship between the variables and 1 indicates a strong relationship (Pennings et al. 2006:103). The value of *v* can then be compared according to the marginal values, and the results of one cross table analysis may be assessed with respect to the other analyses²². This makes it possible to use *Cramer's v* in order to assess in which channels autonomy matters the most for participation.

Table 6: Relationship between autonomy and each of the six participation channels.

	Percentage difference	Chi-square	Cramer's V
European Commission	11.4	4.619	.141
Council of the EU	19.2	28.000	.347
European Parliament	5.4	5.518	.154
Committee of the Regions	51.8	63.668	.523
Regional lobbies	38.1	33.303	.378
Brussels office	13.5	4.727	.142

Table 6 shows the results from six cross table analyses, testing the effect of autonomy on each of the six participation channels available to EU regions. All of the relationships are significant, with chi-square values higher than the critical value of 3.841 for a five per cent significance level (Bohrnstedt and Knoke 1994:509).

The relationship between autonomy and the EP is relatively weak. The percentage difference indicates that the participation in the European Parliament too little degree depends on political autonomy. The relationship between autonomy and participation in the European Commission has a higher percentage difference than the relationship between autonomy and EP participation has, but only slightly. It may seem like regional participation in policy-making through the EP and the Commission only to small degree can be attributed to a region's degree of political autonomy.

²² Such comparison would not have been possible in the same simple manner if alternative forms of analysis available for dichotomous variables, such as logistic regression, had been used.

Participation through regional representation offices in Brussels does not seem to be particularly closely connected to autonomy either. The percentage difference between the two variables falls below 15 per cent, indicating that participation through office establishment depends little on autonomy.

Three relationships stand out as stronger than the others. Participation in the channels Council of the EU, Committee of the Regions and Regional lobbies are all clearly stronger connected to political autonomy than participation through the other three channels. The percentage differences show that participation from regions with high political autonomy is far more extensive than participation from regions with low autonomy. In the Council of the EU channel, participation from high autonomy regions is 19.2 per cent higher than participation from low autonomy regions. Participation in regional lobbies from highly autonomous regions is 38.1 per cent higher than from those with less autonomy, whereas participation in the Committee of the Regions is 51.8 per cent higher from high autonomy regions than from the low autonomy ones.

In sum, these results suggest that political autonomy is particularly closely connected to three of the participation channels available to European regions. In other words, it seems like there may be a pattern in how autonomy influences participation, and as if the six channels are divided into two groups where the effect of autonomy on participation is clearly higher in one group than the other.

Analysis of the *Cramer's v* values in table 6 confirms the pattern suggested above. The values show that the relationships between autonomy and the channels in the group consisting of the channels Council of the EU, the Committee of the Regions and regional lobbies are far stronger than the relationships between autonomy and the channels European Commission, European Parliament and representation offices. The values for participation in the Council, the Committee of the Regions and regional lobbies are more than twice as high as for participation in the Commission, the EP and through regional offices in Brussels.

The three channels, in which regional participation seems to be affected the most by participation, are quite different in character. The Council of the EU is first and foremost a part of the executive dimension in the EU, together with the European Commission. The input of the Committee of the Regions concerns legislation, whereas regional lobbies try to influence different parts of the policy-making process, all depending on the issues at stake (Peterson and Shackleton 2006; Keating and Hooghe 2006). They do, however, share one common trait that separates them from the three other participation channels.

Participation in the Council, the Committee of the Regions and in regional lobbies all follows distinct formal procedures. As pointed out already in the discussion of the dependent variable, regional participation in the Council of the EU depends on ministerial status. Regional politicians must be formally recognized as ministers domestically in order to be able to participate in the Council. Participation in the Committee of the Regions also depends on formal criteria. In order to gain access to the Committee, regions must be selected to take part in the national committee delegation, chosen in each member state for a period of five years. Finally, participation in the regional lobbies Council of Communes and Regions of Europe (CEMR) and Assembly of European Regions (AER) is decided by a defined set of membership procedures. Hence, participation through this channel is also formal in its character.

That participation in the Council of the EU largely is reserved for regions that are highly autonomous in domestic policy, is nothing new. The relationship between autonomy and participation in the Council is long established in the literature on regional participation in EU policy-making (Hooghe and Marks 1996; Bomberg and Peterson 1998; Greenwood 2003; Keating and Hooghe 2006; Tatham 2008). This cross table analysis confirms this relationship, stressing the connection between the formal participation procedures found in the Council and domestic autonomy arrangements found in the member-states.

More interestingly, the analysis shows that autonomy matters even more for participation in the Committee of the Regions and in regional lobbies that work for regional interests on the EU level. This brings new insight in these two participation channels. Earlier research has focused on how the power of the CoR is weakened by the internal disagreement between participating regions relating to the differing institutional strength they have domestically (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:225; Keating and Hooghe 2006:277). That the actual participation as such depends on the degree of autonomy found in the different EU regions has not been discussed, however. Perhaps are these two phenomena related: who participates in the Committee could have something to say for the degree of influence it is able to exercise within the EU on a whole. This topic could be investigated further in future research.

When it comes to participation in regional European-wide lobbies, this has not been discussed in any substantial degree in previous research. Some work has been done on narrow interests regional coalitions such as the group of peripheral maritime regions and the group of industrial technology regions (Bomberg and Peterson 1998:230), where participation depends on special interests in specific issues. For the most influential, large-scale lobbies, however, participation has largely been

taken for granted (Tatham 2008:508; Keating and Hooghe 2006:277). As it turns out, this participation depends on more general institutional differences among regions, namely political autonomy in the domestic context. Whether this has any impact on the way the lobbies work, or on the way in which they manage to influence policy-making and legislation in the EU, could be an interesting area for more research in the years to come.

As shown, the effect of autonomy on participation in the three channels European Commission, the European Parliament and regional Brussels offices is distinctively lower. Common to these three channels is that participation is less formally regulated. This could explain why autonomy does not seem to have a strong effect on whether regions participate or not. Participation in Commission consultations, which is what the proxy measure of the EC looks at, is decided by regions themselves and not by some formal selection procedure. Regional opinions may be forwarded directly to the EC by any region interested in promoting their point of view on a specific issue, highly autonomous or not. Participation in the Parliament is a regulated affair, but not in the same way like for instance CoR participation is regulated. EP participation depends on European voters, and the votes they cast for regional parties. Hence, autonomy as such has little direct effect on participation. Thirdly, the establishment of representation offices in Brussels does not depend on rules and regulations, but rather on how useful regions find these offices to be. As discussed earlier, autonomy might not be the strongest explanatory factor for the establishment of such offices, as this seems to be related to other factors such as a region's resource-richness.

6.6 Summary

This analysis has shown that the central determinant for regional participation in the policy-making structures of the EU is political autonomy. For the 233 EU regions studied here, the degree to which they have responsibility for policy domestically is decisive for how much they participate in the six central participation channels of the Union. The results support previous work arguing the importance of autonomy for participation (Marks et al. 1996; Nielsen and Salk 1998). They do not, however, support findings from the same analyses suggesting that regional participation also depends on resources and identity (Marks et al. 1996; Nielsen and Salk 1998; Tatham 2010). When looking at policy-making participation in a conceptually broader sense like this analysis does, autonomy is *the* factor that matters.

The findings also underline that participation in European Union policy-making does not exclude participation in domestic policy-making, as indicated in previous research (Tatham 2010). On the

contrary, regions that are highly entrenched in policy-making nationally also participate more in EU policy-making structures. This shows that regional participation is not a matter of either/or, but rather a game of being able to use the participation channels that open on different levels of policy-making.

Moreover, the analysis indicates that autonomy structures are particularly important for participation in the Committee of the Regions, the Council of the EU and in European-wide regional lobbies. Having a strong role in the domestic political context seems to matter significantly more for participation in channels where access is defined by formal criteria than for participation in channels where access is more open and informal. Based on this, the established notion that autonomy is decisive for participation in the Council, can be applied to participation in the CoR and in regional lobby organizations as well.

The results also show that the explanatory model as a whole is able to account for substantial amounts of the variation in regional participation in the EU. The Europeanization perspective with its focus on structural determinants seems quite well fit to identify the conditions that allow regions to bypass the member-states and seek more direct influence on EU policy-making, explaining close to half of all variation in regional participation.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis set out to uncover the determinants of regional participation in European Union policy-making, by pursuing three main scientific goals. First, the thesis has made an effort in building down the discrepancy between qualitative and quantitative research on regional participation. Using the descriptive work of qualitative researchers, I have constructed a quantitative measure of regional participation consisting of six different participation channels available to regions within the EU system. This measure differs from the participation measure used in previous quantitative research, as it measures participation more broadly. Hence, it gives a more complete picture of regional participation in EU policy-making.

Second, the thesis has put together a theoretical framework that describes both *how* regions may participate in policy-making, and that explains *why* regions seek participation in the EU. The framework clarifies the mechanisms at work that drive regions to bypass the state, and serves as the basis for building an explanatory model for regional participation. In this explanatory model, the degree to which regions manage to bypass the state is hypothesized to depend on structures within each EU member-state.

Third, a multiple regression analysis has been conducted in order to test the effect domestic structures have on regional participation in the EU. The analysis includes 233 regions from the entire EU27, making it the largest comparative research project on regional participation ever conducted in terms of number of units. Using a large sample and a more inclusive measure of participation, the analysis provides a solid point of departure for uncovering the determinants of regional participation in EU policy-making.

7.1 Summary of main findings

The main finding in this analysis is that regional participation in EU policy-making structures is contingent on the degree of political autonomy a region has within its own member-state. The regression analysis shows that when autonomy increases, participation increases as well. This finding strengthens previous findings by Marks et al. (1996) and Nielsen and Salk (1998), who also emphasize the importance of autonomy as a determinant of regional bypassing of the state. Moreover, this analysis finds that other factors like resources and identity do not matter for participation in any significant degree. This differs from results in previous research, where both

financial strength and political divergence from national government has been identified as factors leading to more regional participation in the EU.

Furthermore, close examination of the main finding shows that political autonomy domestically is particularly important for participation in channels that have a strong formal dimension. Participation in the Council of the EU, the Committee of the regions and in European-wide regional lobbies depends largely on whether a region is highly autonomous or not. Autonomy seems to be less important for participation through the European Commission, the European Parliament and Brussels representation offices.

The analysis largely confirms the importance of structures when it comes to explaining regional participation in EU policy-making. Domestic structures seem to be able to account for almost half of all variation in regional participation, and the explanatory model hence seems to be relatively well fit to explain in which situations regions are likely to bypass their member-states in order to seek direct influence on the EU level. In order to control for alternative explanations that may complement the structural approach and explain more of the variation in regional participation, further exploratory and field research is needed.

7.2 Contribution to the field of research

The findings in this analysis offer some interesting contributions to the field of research on regional participation in the European Union. Empirically, as summarized above, the analysis finds that autonomy is the main predictor for participation in policy-making. This brings new knowledge to the literature on the role of regions in the EU. Previous studies have found that several factors matter for regions to establish representation offices in Brussels. However, when the concept and measure of participation is broadened to include all six channels that feed into EU policy-making, political autonomy is the only factor that has a significant effect on how much regions are able to participate.

Theoretically, the findings indicate that the multi-level governance as an approach to understanding regional participation in the EU is a useful one. As shown, a high degree of political autonomy makes regions capable of bypassing their member-state in pursuit of more participation in EU policy-making. At the same time, the autonomy index measures how integrated a region is in the domestic policy-making by looking at how much shared rule regional and national governments have. In the index, more shared rule equals more political autonomy. In turn, this means that the

regions that are strongly entrenched nationally also are the ones that manage to participate the most in the EU. This suggests that participation not necessarily is a matter of either/or: for regions with clearly designated and extensive policy responsibilities, it seems possible to participate on several political arenas contemporaneously. This stands out as an endorsement to multi-level governance theory, drawing a picture of an EU where different players act on several different political levels, European as well as domestic.

Although the findings in this analysis dismiss some of the previous explanations of participation in favor of political autonomy as the central determinant, the degree to which national political context matters for participation suggests that the overall conclusion of much previous research still stands strong. The “Europe of the Regions” theme might seem somewhat exaggerated, given the fact that regions themselves seem to depend on their domestic position in order to be able to bypass the state. As such, the control of regional state bypassing remains with the state through its constitutional and devolutionary arrangements.

In addition, the close examination of the autonomy finding makes another interesting contribution to the body of literature on European regions. Several scholars have recognized the importance of political autonomy in order for regions to achieve participation in the Council of the EU. According to the findings in the cross table analysis, this relationship can be extended to apply not only to the Council, but to formal participation channels more generally. Participation in both the Committee of the Regions and in regional lobbies seems to be closely connected to domestic autonomy structures.

7.3 Implications for European regions

In the sense that regional participation in the EU to a large degree depends on national autonomy structures, the conclusion for European regions is a pessimistic one with regards to achieving more direct access to EU policy-making. If participation is contingent on national arrangements for devolution of powers, there is little regions may do to in order to participate more in the EU except for continuing the struggle for more power in the domestic realm. Hence, at the present time it does not seem very likely that regional participation in the EU will increase particularly much.

However, at the same time there are trends in several EU countries of more devolution and increasingly more powerful and autonomous regions. In the UK, both Wales and Scotland have been given more extensive power in the recent years. In Spain, many regions battle for stronger

self-rule within the domestic system. In Italy, the debate of more autonomous regions is stronger than in many years, with discussions of introducing fiscal federalism for Italian regions. And, perhaps most interestingly, there are indications of more regional political autonomy in some of the more unitary EU member-states as well.

In 2010, Finland introduced a new administrative subdivision with policy competencies in many of the policy areas where European integration is strong. In 2008, a similar process took place in Denmark. Also in many of the former communist member-states, where regions in general have played only a small role in national politics, new administrative subdivisions are emerging. Although they often have few actual policy competencies, regions in countries like Hungary, Poland and Bulgaria are more visible now than they have ever been before. Should there be any increase in regional participation in the EU, it is not unlikely that it will come in the “new” EU. If administrative competencies continue to be transferred to new regions in the youngest members of the EU, an increase in regional participation could perhaps be observed in the years to come.

In addition to the fact that more regional autonomy in many EU countries could lead to more direct action from regions towards the EU, the results from the cross table analysis show that regions may have some options of their own if they want to strengthen their participation in EU policy-making. As demonstrated, autonomy structures primarily have an impact on participation through the channels that are of the most formal character, namely the Council of the EU, the Committee of the Regions and regional lobbies. This suggests that if a region has an interest in increasing participation, it could seek to do so through the three more informal participation channels, where participation is less affected by rigid domestic devolutionary provisions. In particular, the European Commission and representation offices in Brussels can be useful tools in order to actively increase participation. In general, the Commission is sympathetic to the views of small actors, and through consultation procedures and direct contact regions may gain more access to the policy-making of the Union. This direct contact could go through for instance regional representation offices, the frontline protagonists of European regions in Brussels. More generally, these offices play an important role in the contact regions have with different EU agencies in gathering and providing information, and as such they constitute a useful access point to EU policy-making for European regions. Thus, regions that seek a larger role in the European capital may devote themselves to using these less formal channels of participation more actively.

7.4 Suggestions for further research

In this thesis, an index measuring regional participation that is based on a wider conceptualization of what constitutes participation in the EU has been developed. The work with this index is by no means done. A goal for future research could be to make the Regional Participation Index more sophisticated, something that could be done in a variety of ways. One element of this process could for instance be to include more Commission consultation procedures, thus making the European Commission component more informative. An ultimate goal for such an index could be to create a more continuous variable, making it more useful and informative for comparative, large-N research. Another element could be to repeat the measurement process at several points in time for all components. This would make it possible to see whether there is variation in regional participation over time, and to test if the effect of the factors found to affect participation in this analysis change over time.

Another area where more research would be of interest is in possible alternative and complementary explanatory perspectives on regional participation. As made clear in the discussion in chapter four on explanatory dimensions that perhaps could complement the structural perspective, there is a lack of testable data for dimensions such as regional ability and the socializing effects of European integration. With more field work and data collection in these areas, it could in the future be possible to control for the effect these dimensions are hypothesized to have on how regions participate in the EU.

Finally, of course, further research on the main findings in this analysis could be interesting. For instance could a close examination of the relations between the most autonomous EU regions and the different actors in the policy-making process in the EU give more insight to what it is that characterizes the participation in the EU of strong regional authorities. More work on the effect of autonomy on participation in each of the six participation channel would be of large interest as well. In particular, a closer investigation of what it is that drives participation in the three channels where autonomy does *not* seem to matter could enrich the picture of how regions relate to the EU.

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APPENDIX

Table A1: Regional Participation Index scores, by region (N = 233).

NAT	Region	RPI	EC	CoEU	EP	CoR	Lobby	Office
AT	Burgenland	2	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
AT	Nieder- österreich	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
AT	Wien	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
AT	Kärnten	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
AT	Steiermark	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
AT	Ober- österreich	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
AT	Salzburg	2	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
AT	Tirol	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
AT	Vorarlberg	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
BE	Region de Bruxelles- Capitale	5	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
BE	Vlaams Gewest	5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
BE	Region Wallonne	4	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
BG	Severozapaden	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
BG	Severententralen	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
BG	Severozitochien	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
BG	Yugozitochien	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
BG	Yugozapaden	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
BG	Yuzhententralen	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
CY	Kibris	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
CZ	Praha	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
CZ	Střední Čechy	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
CZ	Jihozápad	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
CZ	Severozápad	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
CZ	Severovýchod	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
CZ	Jihovýchod	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
CZ	Střední Morava	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
CZ	Moravsko- slezsko	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
DK	Hovedstaden	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
DK	Sjælland	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
DK	Syddanmark	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
DK	Midtjylland	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
DK	Nordjylland	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
EE	Põhja-Eesti	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
EE	Lääne-Eesti	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
EE	Kesk-Eesti	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
EE	Kirde-Eesti	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
EE	Lõuna-Eesti	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
FI	Itä-Suomi	3	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

FI	Etelä-Suomi	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FI	Länsi-Suomi	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FI	Pohjois-Suomi	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FI	Åland	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Île de France	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
FR	Champagne-Ardenne	2	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Picardie	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Haute-Normandie	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
FR	Centre	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Basse-Normandie	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Bourgogne	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Nord - Pas-de-Calais	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
FR	Lorraine	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Alsace	2	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Franche-Comté	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Pays de la Loire	3	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Bretagne	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
FR	Poitou-Charentes	3	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Aquitaine	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Midi-Pyrénées	3	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Limousin	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Rhône-Alpes	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
FR	Auvergne	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
FR	Languedoc-Roussillon	2	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
FR	Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
FR	Corse	3	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
FR	Guadeloupe	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Martinique	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Guyane	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
FR	Réunion	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
DE	Baden-Württemberg	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Bayern	3	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
DE	Berlin	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Brandenburg	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Bremen	3	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
DE	Hamburg	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Hessen	3	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
DE	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Niedersachsen	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Nordrhein-Westfalen	3	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
DE	Rheinland-Pfalz	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Saarland	3	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
DE	Sachsen	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Sachsen-Anhalt	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DE	Schleswig-	4	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

	Holstein							
DE	Thüringen	3	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
GR	Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
GR	Kentriki Makedonia	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
GR	Dytiki Makedonia	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
GR	Thessalia	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
GR	Ipeiros	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
GR	Ionia Nisia	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
GR	Dytiki Ellada	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
GR	Stereia Ellada	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
GR	Peloponnisos	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
GR	Attiki	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
GR	Voreio Aigaio	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
GR	Notio Aigaio	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
GR	Kriti	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
HU	Közép- Magyarország	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
HU	Közép- Dunántúl	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
HU	Nyugat- Dunántúl	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
HU	Dél-Dunántúl	2	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
HU	Észak- Magyarország	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
HU	Észak-Alföld	2	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
HU	Dél-Alföld	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
IE	Border, Midland and Western	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
IE	Southern and Eastern	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
IT	Piemonte	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Liguria	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
IT	Lombardia	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
IT	Provincia Autonoma Bolzano/ Bozen	4	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Provincia Autonoma Trento	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
IT	Veneto	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
IT	Emilia- Romagna	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
IT	Toscana	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
IT	Umbria	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Marche	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Lazio	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Abruzzo	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Molise	2	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
IT	Campania	1	No	No	No	No	Yes	No

IT	Puglia	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Basilicata	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
IT	Calabria	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Sicilia	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	Sardegna	2	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
LV	Kurzeme	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
LV	Latgale	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
LV	Rīga	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
LV	Pierīga	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
LV	Vidzeme	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
LV	Zemgale	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
LT	Alytaus apskritis	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
LT	Kauno apskritis	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
LT	Klaipėdos apskritis	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
LT	Marijampolės apskritis	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
LT	Panevėžio apskritis	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
LT	Šiauliai apskritis	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
LT	Tauragės apskritis	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
LT	Telšiai apskritis	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
LT	Utenos apskritis	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
LT	Vilniaus apskritis	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
LU	Luxembourg (Grand-Duché)	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
MT	Malta	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
NL	Groningen	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
NL	Friesland	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
NL	Drenthe	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
NL	Overijssel	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
NL	Gelderland	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
NL	Flevoland	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
NL	Utrecht	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
NL	Noord-Holland	1	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
NL	Zuid-Holland	1	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
NL	Zeeland	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
NL	Noord-Brabant	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
NL	Limburg	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PL	Łódzkie	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
PL	Mazowieckie	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
PL	Małopolskie	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
PL	Śląskie	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
PL	Lubelskie	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
PL	Podkarpackie	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
PL	Świętokrzyskie	1	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
PL	Podlaskie	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
PL	Wielkopolskie	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PL	Zachodnio-	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

	pomorskie							
PL	Lubuskie	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
PL	Dolnoslaskie	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
PL	Opolskie	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
PL	Kujawsko-Pomorskie	2	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
PL	Warminsko-Mazurskie	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
PL	Pomorskie	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
PT	Norte	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
PT	Algarve	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
PT	Centro	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
PT	Lisboa	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
PT	Alentejo	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
PT	Região Autónoma dos Açores	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PT	Região Autónoma da Madeira	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
RO	Nord-Vest	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
RO	Centru	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
RO	Nord-Est	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
RO	Sud-Est	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
RO	Sud - Muntenia	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
RO	Bucuresti - Ilfov	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
RO	Sud-Vest Oltenia	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
RO	Vest	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
SK	Bratislavský kraj	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
SK	Západné Slovensko	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
SK	Stredné Slovensko	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
SK	Východné Slovensko	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
SL	Vzhodna Slovenija	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
SL	Zahodna Slovenija	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
ES	Galicia	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
ES	Principado de Asturias	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
ES	Cantabria	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
ES	País Vasco	4	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
ES	Comunidad Foral de Navarra	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
ES	La Rioja	1	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
ES	Aragón	2	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
ES	Comunidad de Madrid	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
ES	Castilla y León	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
ES	Castilla-La Mancha	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
ES	Extremadura	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

ES	Cataluña	5	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ES	Comunidad Valenciana	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
ES	Illes Balears	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
ES	Andalucía	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
ES	Región de Murcia	3	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla	0	No	No	No	No	No	No
ES	Canarias	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
SE	Stockholm	3	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SE	Östra Mellansverige	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SE	Småland med öarna	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SE	Sydsverige	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SE	Västsverige	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SE	Norra Mellansverige	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SE	Mellersta Norrland	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SE	Övre Norrland	2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
UK	North East England	2	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
UK	North West England	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
UK	Yorkshire and the Humber	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
UK	East Midlands	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
UK	West Midlands	2	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
UK	East of England	1	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
UK	London	1	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
UK	South East England	1	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
UK	South West England	2	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
UK	Wales	4	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
UK	Scotland	4	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
UK	Northern Ireland	2	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes